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Encounter

February 1977

A New Symposium

Who's Left, What's Right?

Writers Reply to an Inquiry into Changing Attitudes towards Liberalism, Conservatism, Radicalism

John Wain
Peter Jenkins
Auberon Waugh
Daniel Bell
Max Beloff
Mark Abrams
D. J. Enright
Peter Jay
Donald MacRae
Hugh Thomas
Luigi Barzini

J. P. Stern: Nietzsche

John R. Silber: U.S. Counterfeits

Sidney Hook: Lillian Hellman & her Scoundrel Time

Alexander Walker, Benedict Nightingale: Stage & Screen

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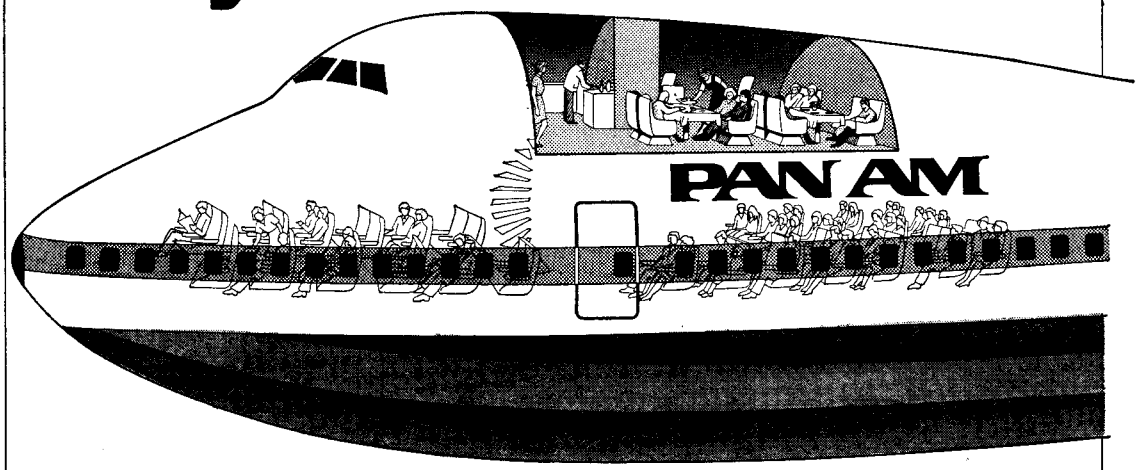

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An ENCOUNTER Symposium

Who's Left, What's Right?

THE PROBLEM *is hardly a new one. It has been too much with us ever since certain radical, insurgent, innovatory political groupings decided to seat themselves on—of all places—the left side of the French Revolutionary Convention. Why on that odd and awkward place? Why not on the other side, the right side, the place of rectitude, where law and the higher right resided, where man's best hand could be raised in righteous honour? Anyway they went left, and man's political passions have never been the same.*

When the first democratic Portuguese assembly gathered two years ago in Lisbon, nobody (but nobody) wanted to sit in the empty seats to the right of the centre aisle. And only last month a left-wing West European who had gone to live in Eastern Europe—for he was "Left where the heart beats"—was expelled and left stranded in the Ruhr where he had been singing the praises of the Communist Revolution. Wolf Biermann insisted (as he has in all of his poems and songs) that he was "left-wing." The East German Communist government announced that he was a "right-wing" dissentnik, *guilty of calumnies against the true faith. The faithful around the world were confused. The Chinese Communists saw in the Biermann expulsion a typical case of frightened conservatives indulging in right-wing Soviet-style adventurism. The Euro-Communists saw in Biermann's heresies another liberal illustration of authentic Left independence.*

DO, THEN, *the words "Left" and "Right" make any sense at all? At least when Humpty-Dumpty insisted on his own "master-meanings" he reassured Alice: "When I make a word do a lot of work like that, I always pay it extra...." Well, we are paying several dozen writers, publicists, and intellectuals a little extra to answer the question. In the first part of a world-wide inquiry into such changes and confusions in fundamental political attitudes, our distinguished contemporary,* Commentary *Magazine of New York, launched a symposium (September) on "What is a Liberal—Who is a Conservative?" It was a "very American" inquiry, confining itself for the most part to USA issues as viewed by 64 American writers.*

1) **Are you satisfied with the way terms like liberal and conservative, or Left and Right, are used today?**
2) **If not, how do you think these terms should be used? If so, how do you deal with the fact that many positions which used to be called liberal are now called conservative (for example, support for economic growth or opposition to quota systems) and others which used to be called conservative are now called liberal (for example, support for de-centralisation or opposition to big government)?**
3) **Does it matter how these terms are used? Why?**

THIS PART OF THE INQUIRY *will, we hope, extend the discussion to the Rest of the World. We have invited British and European intellectuals, as well as authorities on Latin American and Afro-Asian issues, to take up the aspects of changing ideas, ideals, and ideologies, in a more universal perspective. The terms of reference, although for technical purposes the questions remain the same, will accordingly be widened and extended from the rather special national usages of "liberal" and "conservative" in American discourse. We are talking about, of course, Socialism and Capitalism, "Leftism" and "Fascism", corporate states and mixed economies, totalitarianism and anti-communist dissidence, revolution and devolution, collectivism and individualism, enlightened progressives and hide-bound reactionaries (or vice versa)....*

A second instalment will appear next month, including contributions from J. L. Talmon, Andrew Shonfield, David Holden, Golo Mann, Henry Fairlie, George Mikes, Samuel Brittan, George Urban, Robert Conquest, Peregrine Worsthorne, Norman Podhoretz.

M.J.L.

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John Wain[1]

WHEN I was sixteen I was a Socialist. I believed in soaking the rich and doing away with Lords, Earls, and Dukes. Then everybody would be happy.

I also knew that over on the other side of Europe, where nobody I knew had ever been, there was a country called Russia by old-fashioned people, but by up-to-date people called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. There, the rich had been soaked out of existence; and there were no Lords, Earls, and Dukes; and everybody was happy.

I knew that everybody was happy in the USSR because I had been told so by Dr Hewlett Johnson in a book called *The Socialist Sixth of the World*. I knew that Dr Hewlett Johnson would not tell a pack of lies because he was a minister of the Christian religion. I also knew that in the happy USSR there were no ministers of the Christian religion, except a few hiding out in holes and corners, because they had been abolished at the same time as the people with handles to their names. But I did not spot the anomaly. Spotting the anomaly was not a game I was good at.

I knew, for that matter, that the Nazi Party, which was currently engaged in trying to kill me, also called itself Socialist, but that did not worry me either.

So matters stood for a long time. I went on calling myself Socialist, and saying what paradise it must be in the USSR, and calling private-enterprise business a legalised system of robbery, until I finally had to go through the painful process known as Growing Up. Like everyone else, I put off Growing Up as long as I could; but in the end it happened, painfully, and I came out of it knowing that the USSR was just another big imperialist power like the others and that private-enterprise business was sometimes necessary because any business that is run by bureaucrats in safe jobs is going to be run at half-speed and half-cock. The way the railways have been run, for instance, since they ceased to be private businesses out for profit, has robbed the citizenry even more handsomely than the worst buccaneer could have done, and profited no one except the manufacturers of shoe-leather.

Having Grown Up, I started worrying about whether I was Left, and if so how far Left. On the other hand, I knew I wasn't Right, because being Right meant that you lined up with the unscrupulous economic forces that once sent little boys up chimneys and down mines, and in our day produced horrors like commercial television. So what was I?

It was all very confusing. I started worrying about the ruination of the environment and the extermination of wild-life some ten years before these became widespread concerns. I thought Socialists, who were out for a Better Life For All and not just lovely dividends for the rich, would see it my way; but I soon found out that if I said it was a pity that such-and-such a river should be polluted or such-and-such a green county buried under tarmac, people on the Left brushed me aside and said it Made Jobs. But I could see that when somebody waved a wand and the jobs moved somewhere else, the river stayed polluted and the green ground stayed under tarmac. Apparently only social reactionaries, who read *Country Life*, thought as I did about the environment, and that was probably because they owned chunks of it.

The confusion got worse and worse. The more I tried to straighten out the game, the more draughty gaps appeared in the rule-book.

THEN ALONG CAME SOMETHING called the New Left. This looked promising. They played the zestful old game of being against everything. They were against what they called "the military-industrial complex", but they did not, like the Old Left, want to join a rival one on the other side of Europe. They were against anyone who tried to take away their liberties, but they disapproved of armed forces whose job was to protect those liberties. They thought Ho Chi Minh was Santa Claus, but formed no queues to buy cheap excursion tickets to the land he ruled over. They were very hot for Bangladesh, while placidly accepting that their other idols (*i.e.* the Chinese) supported President Bhutto in his efforts to crush that state. Altogether they had a fine time. In order to keep in the right state of miasma so that these opinions did not rub together painfully in their consciousness, they often resorted to drug-taking, and were very angry with people who said that their minds were not all that good to start with and ought to be left alone rather than made worse.

By this time I was in such a mess with the terms "Left" and "Right", and their more formal versions "Socialist" and "Conservative", that I gave up on them. I now judge each issue as it comes up, and it has left me with a hotch-potch of opinions. I favour a mixed economy, and I only wish it could be one that promoted economic stability rather than the shibboleth of "growth." I dislike the thought of running down the armed forces because I think there are powerfully armed

[1] JOHN WAIN, novelist, poet, literary critic, is Professor of Poetry, University of Oxford. In 1974 he was awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for his biography of Samuel Johnson, published by Macmillan who in 1975 brought out his epic poem, *Feng*.

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adversaries who would take our liberties away from us if they could. Even Lords, Earls, and Dukes now seem to me to have their place in the scheme of things. At least they act as a brake on some of the hopheads in the House of Commons.

Without wishing to legislate for other people, then, I have a private moratorium on "Left" and "Right", "Socialist" and "Conservative." What about "liberal"?

THE WORD "LIBERAL" comes from Latin *liberalis*, pertaining to a free man, and I am all for that. I like to be free myself, so far as is compatible with enjoying the benefits of an organised society, and I like to see others free. Of course, good people will be free in good ways, and nasty squalid little people will be free in nasty squalid little ways. Greasy men who are engaged in making money out of the degradation of the sexual instinct, for instance, will always claim to be encouraging freedom, and they will always have liberals backed into a corner so that no one who wants to be thought a liberal will ever support any form of censorship.

Even so, with an occasional gulp of distaste, I would accept the term "liberal", with a small *l* of course, as applied to my attitudes and beliefs. After all, it is a negative definition of some usefulness. The National Front so clearly aren't liberal; nor are the Soviet authorities who give permission for an exhibition of abstract paintings to be held in a field, and then have it smashed by bulldozers. Against that kind of darkness, even the confused liberalism we have in Western Europe does at least give off a faint phosphorescent glow, like a decaying tree-stump.

So my personal answer is, keep "liberal" and scrap the other two. And if the main political parties have got to have labels, I suggest "Rooters" and "Uprooters."

Peter Jenkins[2]

THE WORDS IN QUESTION serve quite different purposes on the two sides of the Atlantic. The United States has a Manichean party system in which each house has many ideological mansions. Americans may think of themselves individually, although perhaps with increasing reluctance, as "liberals" or "conservatives" or as being on "Left" or "Right", but party politics are not perceived to operate on a simple Left-Right axis. People commonly do not think of the Democrats primarily as "the party of the Left" nor of Republicans primarily as "the party of the Right" and still less are presidential candidates (as we have just seen with Carter and Ford) viewed as mere champions of "Left" and "Right."

Europeans may have no less trouble than Americans in applying the conventional terminology to specific issues or as labels on their own individual bundle of attitudes or beliefs, but by and large, they have no great difficulty with the old vocabulary for meaningful conversations about their party politics. This is because the old politics have not changed much, and in every West European country I can think of the essential differences of politics are *still* Left-Right differences. Those who propose new vocabularies —especially to ban the words "Left" and "Right" —seem to be concerned not so much with ending semantic confusion as with ending the class war. Philosophers, especially Oxford ones, can change the vocabulary but they cannot, as Marx enjoined, change the world. So, my answer to the first question is that it is not the terminology or the usage which dissatisfies me, rather the reality.

It is not true in Europe that economic growth has moved from being a Left issue to a Right issue while decentralisation has gone the other way. Economic growth is a consensual issue in most European politics with Left-Right differences about the roles of the State or the Market in achieving it. (The notion that growth has changed sides is, I suspect, hardly more true in the United States and derives from the fashionable application of Californian or Coloradian models to a party politics which still functions decisively on traditional lines.) Centralisation is, for the most part, a Left issue because of the primacy of the economic problem in European politics. But where there are contrary traditions or cross-currents (in Italy, for example, where modernism—the creation of a State—remains an issue) they are subsumed within a politics which remains basically class-orientated.

Of course, there are means to various ends which break free from their ideological moorings. *Dirigisme* is not a monopoly of the Left (France). Market economics are not a monopoly of the Right (Germany). And immobilism threatens (Britain) where means towards ends are rejected simply on ideological grounds. Moreover, terminological paradoxes occur when, for example, the "conservative" forces of Labour are entrenched—or where the Conservative Party, or the party of the Right, poses itself against a left-wing Establishment as the party of "radical" change.

None the less, European politics function chiefly around the contest between Socialist (to varying degrees) and Communist parties, and Conservative

[2] PETER JENKINS was the Washington correspondent of *The Guardian* (London) for two years before returning to become its political columnist.

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parties. Their dispute is chiefly about the distribution of economic power, and hence of wealth and income. The conflict is nearly 200 years old in its modern form; and by continuing to refer to it, and think about it, in terms of "Left" and "Right" Europeans observe a tradition which remains relevant to their societies.

HOW THE TERMS ARE USED does not matter much. In Europe nearly everybody knows what is being talked about, and for as long as an industrialised society can function only on a basis of inequality or the denial of liberty, or both, it will be attacked from the "Left" and defended from the "Right." Those who stand in the middle, or fight on both fronts, make their position no more comfortable by mere semantic adjustments. The conflicts which they may dislike or deplore are not kept going by the ideologically crazed but are real conflicts of real interests which threaten the legitimacy of European-style Western democracies because legitimacy is seen as something conditional on economic and social gratification.

This seems to me to be the profound difference between the United States and Europe which is coming back into focus as the illusion of ideological solidarity fades with the ending of Cold War. Democracy, in Europe, is not both a means *and* a sufficient end as in the United States, and it never has been. Democracy, our history shows, is the object of struggle but also the vehicle for a social struggle which leaves the ultimate destination of the State and the character of its political system in doubt. The cliché of global (and especially transatlantic) "interdependence" notwithstanding, I expect to see Europe and the United States reverting to the keen awareness of each other's differences—the New World (*sui generis*) and the Old—which is the more historical perception than the one of indivisibility, extending even to cultural indivisibility, which persisted from Marshall Aid and the Truman Doctrine until *circa* 1968.

That era—of understanding based on a fundamental misunderstanding—is over and nothing better demonstrates the vast difference between the continents than the miracle-speed at which the United States was able to recover from Viet Nam, Watergate, and her other traumas ... while European society simultaneously experienced a new bout of the systemic crisis from which America seems uniquely liberated.

THESE ARE NOT INTENDED to be value-judgments about social conditions on the two shores of the Atlantic or about the kinds or degrees of justice achieved—still less predictions about the future of "capitalism" but merely comments about the underlying legitimacy or acceptability of their political and social systems. In legitimacy lies the essential difference *between* their systems. It doesn't much matter to Europeans how Americans use their political vocabulary because they are talking essentially about something else. But because the Left-Right spectrum may not be a very helpful device for analysing American politics, we Europeans are not going to change our politics merely by importing American semantics along with our T-shirts and blue-jeans.

We live in different worlds, and the European world is a Left-Right world.

Auberon Waugh[3]

IT IS TEMPTING to argue that the great political divide nowadays is not so much between the Left and the Right as between Liberty and Authority. Certainly the general direction of a man's political opinions, his preferences or his settled conclusions, becomes unimportant when he is subjected to a scrutiny of the extent to which he wishes to impose them on others. But however tempting, it would be untrue to pretend that there is any discernible affinity between those who profess a libertarian tendency on the Left and those who profess it on the Right. Class and team loyalties go far deeper.

In any case, so far as central political debate is concerned, libertarianism has always been the last refuge of the failed politician. The reason for this, and for the tragic disintegration of such earlier heroes as Michael Foot in office, is simply that the whole idea of liberty is in contradiction to the political impulse.

It is this impulse which creates the only important divide in politics nowadays between the *dirigistes*, whether of Left or Right, and the rest of us; the directors and the *dirigendi*; the dynamic or drastic and the pathetic.

The saddest feature of our society is how the vast machine of government has spawned an equally vast number of people wishing to sit at the controls. Large parts of education now concern themselves with Government studies, aspects of sociology devoted towards the improvement and direction of Society; Political studies; Welfare studies; and the final, crowning science of Cybernetics or the theory of social direction

[3] AUBERON WAUGH is a novelist and political commentator. His columns in *Private Eye* and *The Spectator* are a provocative mixture of politics, satire, gossip and fantasy.

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for its own sake. The art of government now consists in a nice judgment of what the directors can get away with at the expense of the *dirigendi* while retaining their power. If they can produce a state of war or other emergency, or reduce the *dirigendi* to an abject state of social and economic collapse, as the Heath, Wilson and Callaghan governments have managed to do, they will be able to get away with far more, and their power urges will be consequently better satisfied.

At present there is little or no conflict between the two political entities. Perhaps apathy is in the nature of *dirigendi*. But the squabbles between directors of Left and Right are unimportant compared to the conflict which must eventually arise between those who wish to control and those who resent being controlled.

Daniel Bell[4]

DOES THE PRESENT political vocabulary make sense? I stopped believing so a long time ago. I can only tell why by parables rather than by the existential denotations of linguistics or logic.

IN 1864 A THEN UNKNOWN BUT NOW world-famous historical personage wrote to his literary collaborator that he was moving from Soho to Primrose Hill so that his growing daughters could meet a better class of eligible young men. His wife, the daughter of minor European nobility, was greatly pleased as well for she could now, with this newly-won respectability, have some "ladies" to tea, something she had been longing to do but could not in Soho. A suitor for one of the three daughters was warded off because he was a trifle raffish and unstable, owing to his revolutionary political involvements. Another was closely questioned whether he could support the daughter in adequate middle-class style, and the marriage was postponed for a while until our personage was satisfied with his future son-in-law's family pedigree.

The literary collaborator, on the other hand, a sometime Victorian manufacturer, did lead a somewhat disreputable life in that he had a long liaison with an Irish working-class girl, and, after her death, continued with her sister. Our historical personage (and especially his wife) strongly disapproved of such conduct, but dared not say so openly because of their dependence on him—though in private letters (many of which were burned after his death) such disapproval was evident.

One of the most important disciples of the two men, while an émigré in Zurich in 1916, lived, according to later recollections by his contemporaries, an exemplary bourgeois life. Each morning, regularly as clockwork, he went into his study, duster in hand, carefully cleaned the room and his desk, and sat down to work a long day. In the evening, after work, he refused to listen to music because it might excite his emotions. He did complain bitterly of some fellow émigrés who lived down the hall, especially one, a compulsive chatterer, who smoked all the time, wandered in and out of his friend's rooms ("as if they were a public corridor") and spent much of his time going to the cinema, something our bourgeois character resolutely refused to do. In fact, the groups identified with each man were often jokingly called the cinemaists and the anti-cinemaists, which the more sly among them sometimes translated as Semites and anti-Semites.

The four men were all actively engaged in politics. Harold Lasswell, the eminent American political scientist, once proposed a theory that politics was the displacement of private neuroses into the public arena, and political styles could be divided accordingly.* Twenty years later, T. W. Adorno suggested that right-wing politicos were authoritarian personalities, and presumably liberals were not. The four men whose habits I have described above were, as the cognoscenti know, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V. I. Lenin and Julius Martov (the Menshevik leader).

Do political views, whether liberal or conservative, relate to different personality constellations? Marx and Lenin were "authoritarian personalities", Engels and Martov were not. So one effort at political classification must be considered a failure.

THESE PROBLEMS OF classification were borne in on me more than thirty years ago, when, as a young tyro in the social sciences, I encountered a number of terms which somehow made no sense to me yet were used freely by my elders and mentors. To express those bewilderments, I wrote an article at that time for *Partisan Review*, called "Word Surrealism." In economics, for example, E. H. Chamberlin of Cambridge, Mass., and Joan Robinson of Cambridge, England, had both (independently, I believe) proposed the term "monopolistic competition." They were seeking to account for the fact that under conditions of partial oligopoly, a stable

[4] DANIEL BELL is Professor of Sociology at Harvard University, and author, among other books, of *The End of Ideology* (1960), *Towards the Year 2000* (1968) and *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (Heinemann and Basic Books, 1976). He is at present living in London.

* Coincidentally, at the same time, Auden was writing that poetry was the displacement of public chaos into private spheres.

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equilibrium, which had hitherto been thought possible only under conditions of perfect competition, could be achieved. I still don't wholly understand the conjunction, but that oxymoron still stands for me as a symbol of how antinomies become one—even without the dialectic. In politics, Sidney Hook coined the term "totalitarian liberals", to designate those liberals who had become apologists for Stalin. I never wholly understood why such persons should still be called "liberal." (Is Brezhnev a "liberal totalitarian"?) Yet in that political clime, the phrase did carry referential, if not denotative, meaning. Jules Monnerot, in writing about communism, called it a "secular religion", a joining of words that shocked me because I had been raised to respect the principle of *havdolah*, or the separation of realms, so that which was the Sabbath was sacred and that of the week mundane. How could religion, whose foundation is the idea of the sacred, be secular? Yet again, the glimmer of light was more illuminating than the lexical definitions—if not carried too far.

Words, of course, change their meaning over time, often startlingly so, and even take on an opposite connotation. Ideology, a word coined by Destutt de Tracy to denote a radical empiricism, or knowledge gained through sense-impressions (a French counterpart, self-consciously, to the scepticism of Hume), came to mean, over time: a belief in the efficacy of ideas over material reality (*The German Ideology*); or a mask for special interests (*The Jewish Question*); the stark combat of totalised ideas (*What is to be Done*?); and a means of mobilising passions at the expense of critical thought (*The End of Ideology*).

Agape, the idea of a love feast held by Christians, the idea of brotherly love, is still defined that way in the O.E.D.; but the entry following, *agapemone*, is defined as the abode of free love, or concupiscence, because some pietists who had come to England to live a communal life were thought to be, by their prying neighbours, living in carnal lust. So the two terms abide next to each other, in the official canon of meanings, in these contrary ways.

Not only words but ideas take on opposite connotations in extraordinary ways. At the turn of the century, Eugenics was allied with (was in fact a product of) the reform and socialist movements, because in the evolutionary perspective this was deemed to be a rational, planned way to improve the quality of the human race, as against blind emotion or the vagaries of the free (marriage) market.

At one time, biological determinism was judged to be "reactionary" because it was deemed to limit the potentials of human nature; and liberals came to believe, overwhelmingly, in the plasticity of human nature. (Most still do.) But some years ago Herbert Marcuse attacked Erich Fromm's sociological Freudianism on the ground that such a view lent itself to a therapy of adjustment to the status quo, while only the unbridled, libidinous drives of *Eros* (throttled as they were by repressive desublimation in bourgeois society) were progressive.

More recently, Noam Chomsky, in his *Reflections on Language*, has argued that those who believe in the plasticity of human nature are the tools of technocrats who want to manipulate human beings on a vast scale; and that only the belief in a stubborn, biological rootedness of the impulse to freedom is the guarantee of ideological purity. Yet poor Chomsky himself has been hoist by the Marxist petard. Only a few years ago, he was accused by a Canadian Maoist cultural-revolution periodical of being "an agent of American Imperialism." It stood to reason. Chomsky's theories that language capacities are innate, and that men generate rules through the properties of mind, were characterised, quite correctly, as philosophical idealism; and as every Marxist knows, idealism is the reactionary philosophy of the bourgeoisie, as opposed to revolutionary materialism. More than that: Chomsky had mentioned, in the publication of his early work, that his researches had been financed by the Office of Naval Research, and why should the American military finance such research if it did not realise that idealistic philosophy would serve to confuse the masses? Q.E.D.

IT IS A PROPERTY OF MIND, if we follow Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss, to divide all thought into binary modes: divisions such as Left and Right ("*sinistra*" and "*droit*"), liberal and conservative, are as inescapable as day and night or black and white or light and dark, though which is which—and that is the political question —will vary over time, and depend, like any uncertainty principle, on the standpoint of the observer.

Yet, since any paired terms exist on axes of coordinates, we need not be bound to the simplistic divisions but can look for fourfold combinations. Thus:

A **liberal conservative** (*e.g.* Milton Friedman) believes in a free market and the right of individuals to do whatever they want to with their lives, including going to pot if they are so inclined.

A **conservative conservative** (*e.g.* Leo Strauss) believes that the masses need to be tutored in the proper ways by a philosophical élite and that

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censorship may be necessary to stop people from reading shameful (*e.g.* pornographic) books.

A **conservative liberal** (*e.g.* Paul Samuelson) believes in a mixed economy, though he is never sure (the liberal side of him) what is the proper mix.

A **liberal liberal** (*e.g.* George McGovern) believes in large-scale government spending and huge social services for those who cannot be trusted with money to obtain the social services they want for themselves, though he is also a populist, opposing élitist culture, and believing that money should be distributed equally to all cultural groups, since all cultures are equally the expressions of the lives of people.

Of course, this is a logical grid of constructed politics, of what Leibnitz called "impervious and eternal simples", the primary elements of unique detonations. What does one do with China, where in succession Liu Shao Chi, Lin Piao, Teng Hsiao-ping and the Shanghai Four are all now unmasked as "capitalist-roaders"? All of that is believable, of course, if one believes in Mao's "law of contradiction." But as my former colleague Sidney Morgenbesser, when asked by a student—who had demolished all of formal logic through the Marxist dialectic—whether or not he believed in Mao's "law of contradiction", replied: "I do and I don't."

DOES THE PRESENT political vocabulary make sense? It does and it doesn't. But let me explain, now, in a non-contradictory way.

During World War II, when I first met him in New York, that melancholy yet wise literary intellectual Nicola Chiaromonte said that he was of the "post-Fascist" generation. He had worked closely with the *Giustizia e Libertà* group founded by Nello and Carlo Roselli, one of whom had been murdered by Mussolini. They sought to go beyond the "old crap" of the Italian social structure, old and outworn ideologies, and the sterile pre-war debates about class interests. With the liberation of Italy, the group reformed itself into the Action Party and, for a time, rose like a rocket to power with Feruccio Parri as the prime minister. Like a rocket, it sputtered out. (The story is told with a cruel but probably accurate malice by Carlo Levi, who had been a member of the group, in his novel *The Watch.*)

In France as well, the same impulses were at work. Those who were tired of the old bourgeois system and had risked their lives in the underground—Sartre, Camus, David Rousset, Georges Altman, the editors of *Combat*—sought, with shining vision, to create a new *Rassemblement*, a rally that would cut across the old lines. And that, too, failed.

It may well be that intellectuals, *qua* intellectuals, can never succeed in politics; and that may be part of the story. But if so, it is only the more immediate, and minor, explanation.

The simple fact which impatient people can never understand is that social systems take a long time to expire. In the 1850s, Marx thought that the "historical revolutionary process" was already undermining bourgeois society and bringing Europe to the brink of socialism. And in 1917,

FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, *the Italian "*liberali*" are easier to define (and more exactly labelled) than "Liberals" in other countries. The Italian "*liberali*" (a small minority which includes more than the members of the* Partito Liberale*), are the direct modernised descendents of the party which, under the leadership of Camillo Cavour, unified Italy in the 19th century, gave her a constitutional, bi-cameral, and secular régime, fought the temporal power of the Church, tried to establish a government of laws and not of men, freed the economy from paralysing shackles, and theoretically extended to all Italians the "Rights of Man." In other words, the "liberali" brought Italy into Europe. The defence of liberty was, and remains, their main preoccupation.*

The question whether they are Left or Right, conservative or progressive, is largely irrelevant. Their exact position does not really depend on their will but on historic circumstances. They confront and fight the Tyrant today as they did in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Tyrant sometimes appears from the Left and sometimes from the Right, changes the colour of his shirts and uniforms, and the slogans on his banners. He may be a capitalist, a trade union leader, a technocrat, or a bureaucrat. Wherever he appears, he must be fought because he invariably threatens liberty.

*This, of course, is true of "*liberali*" everywhere in Europe. They are Left in Spain and Right in Jugoslavia and in the Scandinavian countries. In Italy, however, they have fewer choices and fewer possibilities to manoeuvre. In Italy the Church still wields the strongest political power, and our Communist Party is the most powerful in the West. Italians invented Fascism—and they are still too easily seduced by any form of authoritarian régime.*

*In Italy the liberal revolution is still to be fought. This is why the Italian "*liberali*" often seem (to foreign observers) a little obsolete, often fighting for the preservation of liberal conquests of grandfather's time, conquests which in other countries are by now dear to the hearts of Right conservatives. In reality the Italian "*liberali*", within the Italian context, could be considered the most modern party of all. All others represent a tacit desire to return to regimented, stratified, and immobile forms of society.*

Luigi Barzini[5]

[5] LUIGI BARZINI was for many years an Italian Member of Parliament representing Milan. His best-known books are *The Italians* (1964) and *From Caesar to the Mafia* (1971); he has just completed a memoir of his years as a student and young journalist in New York.

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Lenin thought that World War I signalled the end of capitalism, though what was actually happening—with the destruction of the Hohenzollerns, the Habsburgs and the Romanovs, the rulers of the largest land-masses in Europe—was the final end of the political remnants of feudalism.

Today, in every advanced industrial country, the industrial working class is shrinking relative to the rising new classes in society, particularly the professional and technical classes. In the United States today, one out of every four persons in the labour force is professional and technical and managerial. Probably fewer than 20% of the labour force is engaged directly in industrial production. Yet the translation of these *tendencies* into political groups, and the creation of more appropriate political nomenclatures than those of the present—assuming with "impervious simples" that economic and occupational interests have some overt political counterpart—is a long-term historical process that will take decades to complete.

The new social forms—I speak of advanced industrial societies—are inchoate and it may well be that they will be overwhelmed from within by the declining social classes who, with greater urgency, are seeking to protect their old positions, and from without by the rising forces of the third and fourth and fifth worlds that find themselves economically disadvantaged in the terms of trade.

But we are speaking here of the adequacy of political terms, not of the economic facts of life, and unhappy is a society that has lost the words to understand the world. And worse is a political sociology that keeps chanting old, tired clichés, or seeking for the "authentic Marx",† without realising that their "future" never worked and that the previous future is an idea whose time has passed.

And what of the "next" future? How does one describe the régimes of Boumedienne, Sadat, the Baathists of Iraq, the views of a Jumblatt, an Indira Gandhi, a Mme Bandaranaike, the lunacies of a Ghaddafi or an Amin, the fanaticism of the Khmer Rouge or the sumptuary extravagances of the Arabian princes? Something deeply irrational has been unloosed in the world and we have run out of words to describe it.

† In his recent book, *The Twilight of Capitalism*, Michael Harrington writes that Paul Samuelson, Joan Robinson, Raymond Aron, myself, Louis Althusser and Erich Fromm have all misunderstood Marx and that only *now* has it been possible to reconstruct the "authentic" Marx who had predicted the doom of capitalism. As Harold Laski once said: you can interpret Marx in your way; I will interpret him in His.

Yet what is so striking is that with all the renascent writing on Marxism, none of the Left seek to apply Marxism to the Soviet Union and China and see how the "method" (most assume the predictions were wrong but the method is correct) explains these political developments.

Steven Lukes, a young Oxford sociologist, writes a small book on *Power* which is one of a handbook series intended to instruct the young about power, but in the entire volume there is not a single word on the Soviet Union, the society where naked power is demonstrated *par excellence*. A Swede, Goran Therborn, scrupulously examines the problem of how Marxism can account for its own political consciousness, and discusses in excruciating detail the differences between the "humanist" Marx and the "structuralist" Marx, yet he has not a single paragraph on how one explains the political structure of Communist countries in Marxist terms. One of the few books by a Marxist to deal with *Soviet Marxism*, that of Herbert Marcuse, in a book of that title more than twenty years ago, was a disguised apologia for Stalinism as exemplifying the horrible but still historically necessary "cunning of reason."

Max Beloff[6]

IN HIS HISTORY of the Liberal International, Mr John MacCallum Scott tells a good story. He was, some years ago, at a party in New York when his host said, "We are so pleased you could come along this evening as we have another fine British liberal arriving." The "liberal" turned out not to be a party colleague of Mr MacCallum Scott's but Jennie Lee, left-wing socialist and wife of Aneurin Bevan. Reading the *Commentary* symposium on Liberalism and Conservatism, one was tempted to see it as yet another demonstration of the denaturing of the European political vocabulary in America, and in particular of the confusion between two such distinct concepts as liberalism and socialism which in Europe have always been antithetical.

But is this fair? Professor Gertrude Himmelfarb would appear to think so. In England she assures us the situation is better because both liberalism and conservatism "have retained their moral legitimacy and intellectual respectability", and this means more useful debate. But, whatever may be said about conservatism, it is clearly no longer true that things are better in respect to liberalism, at least as it denotes party attitudes. (It is fair to add that Miss Himmelfarb is talking not of party labels but of ways of thinking about political and social affairs. Nevertheless the use of labels in the political battle should have some relation to the attitudes they suggest.) For by now the British Liberal Party, in its so-called "Young Liberals" in particular, finds room for members whose devotion to socialist and non-Liberal ideals

[6] MAX BELOFF was from 1957–1974 Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, Oxford University; he is now Principal of the University College at Buckingham.

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probably exceeds that of Baroness Lee (as she has meanwhile become).

What one does feel is that the inward-looking habits of mind of most of the contributors to the *Commentary* symposium make it uncertain whether they have still fully appreciated the extent to which some of the debate they are engaged in is *peculiar to America*, and often implies at least *some misunderstanding* of the European scene.

Robert Nisbet for instance, notes that American liberalism has pursued increasingly egalitarian goals and that this trend is likely to persist:

> "Redistribution will prove almost certainly to become the major domestic ideal of liberalism, as we know it today. I would say that, present trends continuing, there will be little difference in a decade between American liberalism and the British Labour party."

He may well be right, as is indeed suggested by the current importance attached by the pink mafia of the British cultural establishment to the "liberal" ideas of, say, J. K. Galbraith. What Professor Nisbet does not make clear is whether he thinks that something akin to the British Labour party could in any meaningful sense claim to be recognisably "liberal".

Confusion does not end here. The lack of a serious capacity either for historical understanding or for analytical precision marks many of the contributions to the *Commentary* symposium whatever the personal stance of the writers. The dilemmas they dissect are often real ones. How have American "liberals" come from repudiating "*separate but equal*" and insisting on colour- and sex-blindness so soon to "*Quotas*", "*Bussing*" and all the other expedients of "*Affirmative Action*" which emphasise the distinctions that the law was thought to have effaced, and that impose injustices on individuals and damage to the community (in, for instance, lowering the standard of educational institutions, in the name of remedying—or better perhaps expiating—the group injustices of the past). But the only reason why this seems to be peculiar to America is that in a society in which ethnic distinctions are more numerous and ethnic groups more important to politicians, such departures from liberalism have been more sudden and more far-reaching in their consequences.

Yet in Britain also, legislation about Race Relations and Sex Discrimination has set aside almost without questioning some vital issues of freedom of speech and of the autonomy of social institutions that were once seen as essential components of the liberal creed to which many of the upholders of these measures profess to adhere. Liberal support of the Labour Party's education policy in its hostility to parental choice, its unwillingness to allow for the differing needs of children of differing potential, in its contempt for local autonomy and for the expertise of teachers, is surely also an indication of the fact that liberalism has lost its meaning and its strength.

WERE IT MERELY A QUESTION of socialism and of the totalitarian impulse (that is inseparable from any socialist or collectivist creed) taking over the liberal inheritance, the intellectual damage to our thinking might be limited. Yet even the inheritors are confused. Professor Norman Birnbaum whose allegiance is clearly socialist and who talks of Jimmy Carter's "singular combination of Southern populism, technocratic rationality and evangelical morality" has yet been an active figure in the Carter campaign. Can he seriously see Carter's reconstituted New Deal coalition as a suitable instrument for bringing socialism to America? Or what are we to make of so distinguished a Marxist historian as Professor Eugene Genovese claiming that the USSR and the USA had a common interest in seeing Dubcek's régime go under in Czechoslovakia because it would have challenged both their systems "by demonstrating that socialism, freedom, and democracy" are indeed compatible? It would seem more reasonable to believe, since these three have not anywhere proved compatible, and logically could not be, that what worried the Russians was precisely the opposite, namely that the Czechs having got freedom and democracy would use them to dispense with socialism. Circles cannot be squared.

What is needed to clarify our minds is to go back to the roots of our concepts. Liberalism cannot be understood without some feeling for the *ancien régime*, an era which never existed in America and which Americans find it hard to imagine. The essentially prescriptive nature of authority in Church and State was the key to that era and the aspect of it against which liberalism was a reaction. "In Western Europe", Professor Owen Chadwick has written in his *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century*, "the ultimate claim of the liberal was religious. Liberal faith in origin rested upon the religious dissenter." It was from these roots that it came to identify the freedom and prosperity of the individual as the measure of social good, and to strike down such aspects of governmental controls and social distinctions as appeared to impede the spread of liberty and the possibility of individual social ascent. Only one or two of the *Commentary* writers appear to see this point, and to be able to apply it to the conditions of a colonial or an immigrant society. As the power of society—the general will mediated through

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representative institutions—became clearer, a new role for collectivities emerged. So that liberalism came to embrace the rights of churches or of trade unions as well as of the individual.

IT IS POSSIBLE to have a liberalism that is pluralistic as well as individualistic, it is not possible to have a liberalism that accepts the unfettered sovereignty of the general will whether acting through a Parliament or embodied in a ruling party. Nor can liberalism be dissociated from the widespread diffusion of property and from its protection as one of the main sources of individual independence.

When, therefore, the Americans go into agonies about the failure of their "liberals" to denounce the Stalinist tyranny (and more infrequently their equal failure to see that the régimes America fought against in vain in Indo-China were likely to prove at least as vile), the moral indignation would be more profitably directed to the mental confusion involved. Otherwise we shall see the same confidence tricks repeated—Berlinguer, Marchais, Wedgwood Benn? There is no way given what we know of human nature and the human experience that could make a government that held the absolute command of a society's material resources (that social democracy demands just as communism does) be anything but a tyranny. Because conservatives are more likely nowadays to uphold the values of family, voluntary association, and tradition that form our last defences against the totalitarianism of socialism, liberal values have ended up in Britain (and perhaps elsewhere) in conservative guardianship. Liberals should not be ashamed to say so.

Mark Abrams[7]

IN 1973, ON THE INITIATIVE of Professors Barnes and Inglehart from the University of Michigan, a group of political scientists from Western Europe met to consider the possibility of a cross-national study of popular political and social values. The intention was that in all countries a more or less common series of attitude questions should be put to a sample of the total adult population, and that the replies should be analysed in the light of the usual variables—age, sex, social class, party support, educational background, etc. There were, of course, the usual difficulties of "harmonisation." What was the British equivalent of a Continental peasant farmer? What Continental educational qualifications should be equated with the British *O*-Levels, *A*-Levels, and *CSE* certificates?

[7] MARK ABRAMS is Director of the Survey Research Unit, Social Science Research Council.

While we were niggling about these problems of standardisation the German participants suggested an additional variable that they felt overrode national boundaries and national social eccentricities. Everyone, they urged, understood the difference between Left and Right as political labels; and therefore each respondent in all countries should be asked to identify himself on a *Left/Right* scale. Then the findings could be examined in the light of three self-identified groups—those who described themselves as "Left", those who claimed to be "Right", and the balance who chose for themselves a midway identification between these two poles.

The British participants, at first, resisted this proposal—largely on the grounds that *Left* and *Right* were concepts and labels which were intrinsically vague and were, more importantly, rather unfamiliar to the ordinary British voter in any political context. However, in the interest of international academic harmony (and to put an end to several hours of inconclusive chat) they agreed to humour their Continental and American colleagues and to include the proposed question in the British survey.

In its final form it was simple enough. Each respondent was given a pencil and a sheet of paper. On the paper there was a horizontal bar divided into ten equal squares; these were not numbered, but at the left end of the bar there was printed in heavy black type the word LEFT, and at the other end the word RIGHT. The respondent was then told:

> "Many people think of political attitudes as being on the 'Left' or 'Right.' This is a scale stretching from the 'Left' to the 'Right.' When you think of your own political attitudes, where would you put yourself? Please mark the scale."

In this country the study was carried out by the Survey Unit of the Social Science Research Council, with Alan Marsh as the project director.

THE ORIGINAL BRITISH DOUBTS turned out to be largely unfounded. Of the 1,933 adults interviewed in Britain (in 1974) as many as 82% promptly gave themselves a place in one of the boxes on the *Left/Right* scale. (This was a lower proportion than in Germany and the Netherlands, but much the same as in Austria and in the United States.) The remaining 18% held back for two main reasons. They said either that they were not interested in politics or that they did not support any of the political parties. The latter type of reply immediately gave one very enlightening clue to what the labels "*Left*" and "*Right*" mean to the British elector. It emerged that of those who used the scale over 80% claimed to be supporters of one of the three main political parties; among

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the non-users of the scale the comparable figure was little more than 40%.

In other words, it would seem that for the British the terms *Left* and *Right* are, primarily, not ideological concepts; they are, rather, alternative names for political parties. In this they differ markedly from the German man-in-the-street. In the West German sample over one-third of those who used the scale said they had no attachment to any one particular party and that their self-placement on the continuum was based on their general values and ideological outlook.

For analytical purposes the boxes were numbered from 1 to 10, with 1 given to the extreme Left box, and 10 to the extreme Right-hand box. The resulting distribution of the self-placements is shown in TABLE 1, which also gives separately the figures for two age groups—those aged 18 to 29, and those aged 30 or more. This division was made in the expectation that the two groups would differ markedly in their self-labelling, with the younger section of the sample indicating much greater identification with the Left.

Three features stand out in this Table. Nearly two-fifths of those marking a box chose the two centre slots; only a handful chose either box 1 or box 10 (furthest Left and furthest Right respectively). Furthermore, the differences between the younger and older age groups were negligible, and the two can therefore be merged and treated as a homogeneous whole. This last finding is uniquely a British situation. In all other participating countries members of the post-War generation gave themselves ratings well to the left of those adopted by their parents and grandparents.

TABLE 1. **Left/Right Self Placements**

		All	*Age under 30*	*Age 30 or over*
		%	%	%
Left	**1**	**7**	**4**	**6**
	2	**3**	**3**	**3**
	3	**8**	**9**	**8**
	4	**9**	**11**	**9**
	5	**17**	**20**	**17**
Centre				
	6	**22**	**27**	**21**
	7	**11**	**11**	**12**
	8	**12**	**10**	**12**
	9	**5**	**2**	**5**
Right	**10**	**6**	**3**	**7**
		100	**100**	**100**

IN THE SEARCH FOR OTHER VARIABLES that might throw some light on what lay behind respondents' self-labelling the ten boxes were "concertina-ed" to produce just three groups: the 27% of respondents who chose boxes 1, 2, 3, & 4 (the *Left*); the 50% who placed themselves in boxes 5, 6, & 7 (*Centre*); and the 23% who chose boxes 8, 9, & 10 (the *Right*).

Between the sexes the differences in self-placements were negligible. Differences in social class were a little more marked, but only respondents from the unskilled working class departed significantly from the overall average; in this

LIBERAL, *conservative, labour. . . . These are good words with (as it happens) reasonably good meanings. (See any dictionary.) It is a shame to spoil them with political associations. They should be removed from politics. Left and right are good, handy, and even necessary words—and the same goes for them.*

Political parties must therefore find new names for themselves, brand-new coinages—like those we come across in science fiction about Other Worlds, or in Gulliver's Travels. *Names without meanings attached, and their meanings yet to make—like Zoog, Broorpus, Pshack, Minchimanch and Minchimunch.*

Whether Minchimanchist or Minchimunchist, politicians should be obliged to describe and convey their policies in good plain terms, and in writing, not via *TV romantic interludes, planned impromptus, or jowl-quivering harangues. They should not compete with Professional Entertainers. The black-and-white of the written word is still the purest medium we have, the least amenable to flummery and flim-flam. Politicians should state what their policies will do in the present, what they are intended to lead to, and what is likely to happen if things go wrong halfway.*

Then we can have an election and vote for Zoog, Broorpus, or Pshack.

Thereafter, Ministers and MPs shall be held personally responsible for practising what they have preached. Broken promises shall be punishable by instant dismissal from the public service and a heavy fine, half to be borne by the individual and half by the party—the only possible plea in extenuation being Acts of God (who on occasion may be held to embrace foreign governments as yet unregenerate).

Opposition parties shall not indulge in self-righteousness or fatuous appeals to the past, nor the Ruling party in evasiveness or fatuous appeals to the future. Since it is assumed that voters are intelligent enough to vote, it must be assumed that they are intelligent enough to be told the truth. Honesty is not a very good policy but it is the best.

Then, perhaps, in time we shall add new words to the English language instead of destroying old ones.

D. J. Enright[8]

[8] D. J. ENRIGHT is a poet, novelist, and literary critic, and has held various Chairs of English Literature in universities abroad. He was from 1970–72 co-editor of ENCOUNTER, and is now a director of Chatto & Windus.

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group almost one-third chose one of the four Left boxes—almost double the proportion located in the three Right boxes.

Those who had been exposed to formal education beyond the minimum school-leaving age were no more prone than others to identify themselves as Left; in this the British sample differed significantly from the French and the Germans.

TABLE 2. **Left/Right Self-Placements (by Sex & Social Class)**

	Left (1, 2, 3, 4) %	*Centre* (5, 6, 7) %	*Right* (8, 9, 10) %
Men	**29**	**51**	**20=100%**
Women	**25**	**50**	**25**
Middle class	**19**	**52**	**29**
Lower-middle class	**19**	**52**	**29**
Skilled working class	**21**	**54**	**25**
Unskilled working class	**32**	**51**	**17**

Not surprisingly, it is the answers to the question "*Which is the political party to which you usually feel closest?*" which started to identify Left and Right in a clear-cut way. Almost 80% of the Lefts opted for the Labour Party, and the same proportion of Rights said they felt closest to the Conservative Party. It would, however, be wrong to conclude that because most Leftists support the Labour Party that therefore all Labour supporters regard themselves as Leftists, or that because most Rightists are Conservatives that therefore all Conservatives see themselves as Rightists. We must remember that half of all respondents chose the Centre boxes, and in this substantial body of the electorate slightly over one-third support the Conservatives and slightly under one-third support the Labour Party. Consequently, if (as in TABLE 3) we consider the self-placements of all the supporters of the Labour Party and all supporters of the Conservative Party we find that there is apparently "factionalism" in both parties—little more than half the Labour supporters described themselves as Left, while the Conservatives divide into equal proportions of Centres and Rights.

TABLE 3. **Left/Right Placement (Party Support)**

	Conservative %	*Labour* %	*Liberal* %
Left	**5**	**53**	**19**
Centre	**48**	**38**	**75**
Right	**47**	**9**	**6**
	100	**100**	**100**

MORE LIGHT ON WHAT LAY BEHIND the self-placements emerged when respondents dealt with various questions that sought to discover their social values and priorities.

For example, they were shown a list of eight "aims and objectives which people say our country as a whole should concentrate upon", and they were asked to indicate which one they thought most important. TABLE 4 gives the answers of those designated Left and Right.

TABLE 4. **"Most important aim for Britain" (By self-placement)**

	Left %	*Right* %
Maintain a stable economy	**30**	**32**
Give people more say in how things get decided at work and in their community	**20**	**10**
The fight against crime	**17**	**20**
Maintain a high rate of economic growth	**11**	**19**
Move towards a society where ideas are more important than money	**9**	**4**
Make sure that this country has strong defence forces	**5**	**10**
Move towards a friendlier less impersonal society	**5**	**2**
Try to make our cities and countryside more beautiful	**3**	**3**
	100	**100**

At least in their assessments of these eight possible national priorities there is not a great deal to distinguish between self-styled Lefts and self-styled Rights. Both give very high priority marks to material ends (economic stability and growth) and to dealing with crime. Neither group attaches outstanding importance to either environmental aesthetics or to closer social relationships.

These similarities between Lefts and Rights are more striking than their differences: the Left, compared with the right, attaches more importance to popular participation in decision-making and less to national military defence; *i.e.* on these figures "populism" would seem to be the distinctive trait of the Left and "patriotism" that of the Right.

IN A SECOND FORAY into the same area of values, respondents were asked to say how important various issues were to them. For this they were offered as possible responses: *very important, important, not very important, absolutely unimportant.* Some of the alleged issues were obviously

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of the kind which any normal person would regard as "*very important*"; they were included, however, so as to highlight the replies on the controversial issues. TABLE 5 shows the proportion designating each issue as "*very important*."

TABLE 5. "Very important" Issues (By self-placement)

	Left %	*Right* %
Providing good medical care	**94**	**90**
Providing good education	**85**	**83**
Providing adequate housing	**85**	**80**
Seeing to it that everyone who wants a job can have one	**80**	**80**
Guaranteeing neighbourhoods safe from crime	**75**	**79**
Fighting pollution	**72**	**79**
Trying to even out differences in wealth between people	**45**	**20**
Guaranteeing equal rights for men and women	**33**	**21**
Providing equal rights for coloured immigrants	**33**	**20**

Here again the most striking impression is the similarity of the two patterns of responses. Both groups attach very high scores of "*very important*" to the more material aspects of life—good medical care, good housing, full employment, etc. And in both groups there is a heavy slump in scores when they come to assess the importance of various aspects of equality—equality of wealth, of equal rights for men and women, and between white and non-white citizens. The Lefts, compared with the Rights, attach somewhat more importance to these; but even among Lefts greater equality ranks in importance a long way behind fighting crime and combating pollution.

In considering these evaluations it should be remembered that on this question, unlike the earlier ones, the respondent was not asked to choose priorities. The zealous Left-winger could, if he had been so minded, have ranked all the three equality issues as very important without in any way diminishing his high regard for good housing, full employment, etc.

CONSIDER THE REPLIES to one more question. Respondents were asked to say if they thought there were any over-privileged groups in British society. 83% of the Lefts said yes, and so did 73% of the Rights. All those who had given affirmative answers were then asked to say who they had in mind. The main Left nominees were: business executives, politicians, the idle rich, speculators, and welfare spongers. Almost the same nominees were put forward by the Right, but there were differences in weighting. The Right were less prone to put forward politicians, business executives, and speculators, and more inclined to charge "greedy workers" and "welfare spongers." However, even the self-styled Left included the last two groups among the over-privileged; each was mentioned by 10% of Left-wingers.

SO, IN THE LIGHT OF this survey, what is the answer to the problem raised by the ENCOUNTER symposium? Briefly, that in any serious discussion of politics it would be best to avoid the descriptions *Left* and *Right* and to use them simply as terms of praise for oneself or of abuse of one's opponent. In real life, at the level of the ordinary voter, there would seem to be little difference in values and priorities between the self-styled Left and the self-styled Right. That at least is the British situation where party loyalty is more important than ideology.

Peter Jay[9]

I LABEL MYSELF a "market socialist"; and as such I have, perhaps, particular reason to regard the conventional Left-Right spectrum of political classification as unsatisfactory.

By "market socialism" I mean the following combined beliefs:

(*1*) that the role of government in society should be confined to the traditional minimal functions plus a negative income tax and specific corrections of market mechanisms through taxes and subsidies where a specific "public good" has been clearly shown to be achievable thereby;

(*2*) that macro-economic policy should be directed to securing a non-inflationary expansion of the money supply, related to the estimated underlying growth of the productive potential of the economy, a balance in the budget and a cleanly floating exchange rate;

(*3*) that regional imbalances in an economy should be seen as suppressed exchange-rate adjustment problems within an excessively large common currency area and should be tackled by actual or simulated exchange-rate adjustments depending on whether it is practical to introduce separate currencies within the larger area;

(*4*) that, for the rest, governments should confine themselves to extending the role of the market as widely as possible and to ensuring a high degree of competition within such markets;

(*5*) that all enterprises employing more than (say) 100 people should be self-owned and managed under the sovereign authority of the people who work in them, each having a single

[9] PETER JAY has been Economics Editor of *The Times* (London) since 1967, and before that was at the Treasury.

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vote for membership of the main board or council; and

(*6*) that such enterprises should raise capital both from retained profits and from a freely operating capital market, where they would borrow both at fixed interest rate and on equity-like terms (giving a share of profits and a mortgage on assets in the event of break-up, but carrying no freehold of the assets or power of appointment of directors).

I MAY BE WRONG, foolish or even mad. But how does it add to my or anyone else's understanding of my position to describe it as Left or Right? I feel the greatest affinity to those Conservative "extremists" who are extreme for individual liberty even at the expense of corporate power and to those Labour "extremists" who are extreme for workers' democracy even at the expense of Government and trade-union power.

I feel the greatest antipathy to those "moderates" in the Conservative, Labour, and other parties—like Heath, Jenkins and Healey—who see Britain's salvation in some national combination of interest groups (Government, CBI, TUC, the NCC, etc) who will arrange matters over the heads of individual voters, consumers, and workers. I am sometimes shunned as subversive, as often denounced as reactionary. I find myself more interested in knowing whether I am right.

Donald G. MacRae[10]

IT IS ONLY for strictly technical discourse on the one hand, and for the purposes of strict art on the other, that I care to think at all about whether I am satisfied or not with the way terms are used. After all, as a more or less native speaker of English, I know. Knowledge is of course not the same as satisfaction, but in this context it comes near enough: I am not confused by the usages I meet with.

But my lack of confusion depends on my knowledge of a kind of map. When someone speaks of Left or Right, Liberal or Conservative, etc., I understand them firstly by knowing whereof and of what time the conversation concerns itself. Left in Britain in 1918 would refer to a collocation of themes and organisations of that time—the ILP, the UDC, part of the Labour Party, a rump of the Liberal Party, most Fabians. Liberal in Manchester in 1876 would have had many of the same meanings as Conservative in Chicago in 1976. Liberal in Spain—where the word was invented—meant different things to the generation of Galdos and the "Generation of '98", which is a term of art. And so on. . . . This is simple enough to be banal. It will of course let me down sometimes. Recently I did not know how to evaluate, or even whether to take seriously, the remark that a Romanian Jewish poet sympathised with the "Left Opposition" in that country. Was I being told about a social democrat (in my usage), or a Maoist, or a mirage? I suspect the last.

In all this I have assumed that there is a map and that I know a good deal about it. In this way I may be deceived. If I am correct, however, then I must admit that most people know at best rather a small part of the map. I don't think this matters, if what they know is the map of their own patrimony and something of that of the really salient alien policies. On the whole, today in Britain I believe this to be true and, with two great exceptions, truer than at any time in the past. (The exceptions are Northern Ireland, a patrimony concerning which the English obstinately refuse to believe what is, alas, the case; and Scotland about which they remain obstinately ignorant.) This seems to me, in a bad time, an encouraging fact. Most people in Western society have better and other things to do than bother excessively about the political.

As our iron century has continued, the peddlers of false maps and the deluded or curmudgeonly, bewildered by abstract and ignorant love or specific hate, have largely inoculated the politics of what we call the West against their infections. This may not last—the generation who were young in the 1960s will carry their pox marks all their lives, just as do those who were young in the 1930s—but it is real enough for the present. The appeals, however strong, of both the radical Right and the radical Left, are more limited than ever before. Those in the West who follow them and who are realists about power must wear gentler masks than formerly in this age. These masks may deceive; they may also, as in Oscar Wilde's tale of *The Happy Hypocrite*, alter the real nature of their wearers.

Thus, for a range of societies, I think I have answered as best I briefly can ENCOUNTER's second question of how I cope with the lability of such terms in different times and countries. I am not troubled; and I don't think that many people in fact are, by the shifts of our political labels, except as these shifts are exploited by those who I regard as my serious political enemies. Here the issues seem to me again fairly simple.

"Enemy" is a strong word, and I mean it. Voltaire is supposed to have said—in fact it was one of his Victorian biographers—that "I hate what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." When I speak of "enemies" I am

[10] DONALD G. MACRAE is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics. His books include *Ideology and Society* (1960) and *Max Weber* (Fontana, 1975).

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not talking of ordinary disagreement, but of those who would use organised political power to destroy the institutional being of their rivals and, very often in our age, their civic being or their lives. I am talking of intolerance, of those who believe they have the right or duty to forbid politics in the sense in which the practice of politics has been the inspiration of all the cultures that stem from the Greeks. This is not just a matter of right or even of existential choice—though I think it is both of these—but it is a point from which certain technical things follow. Any political science and political history, any political sociology, that does not see that tolerant parties have different natural histories will miss what is analytically central to understanding about the destiny of political orders in this century.

For this technical discussion and analysis, Left and Right, Liberal and Conservative, Fascist and Communist, are not adequate terms with which to confront diversities and ambiguities of political behaviour. But as I said that is to become specialist, and I don't think ENCOUNTER's queries are about the technicalities. It also raises the question most directly posed by Carlyle—I am inclined to say, of all people—when he claimed that we have no duty of tolerance to the intolerant. Here one would wish, and I use the term advisedly, for a wise casuistry. Here, too, the terms about which ENCOUNTER asks are insufficient. What I am sure of is that any politics which neglects a piety to the past and to local attachment will of itself be unwise and most probably become itself dangerously intolerant.

That, I suppose is a conservative (with a small *c*) remark, and also ideological. Nevertheless it involves also something utopian, a desire if not a hope, to make the future better and to hold it open. The right to be wrong is the heart of the matter, and the limitations of that right the heart of our most serious debates. It is when these fundamentals arise in real cases, and only then, that the common map becomes inadequate and our terms in ordinary use fail to serve those who ask of them, *Where, When, Who,* and to *Whom*? But most of the time the terms work perfectly well if these questions are asked.

Hugh Thomas[11]

I AM NOT satisfied with our current use of political terminology. Many of the most important ideas—such as regionalism, race, the environment and pollution, and even protectionism—are not matters which intrinsically divide Left from Right, conservatives from liberals, etc. Is an authoritarian socialist really to the *Left* of a social democrat? Were the Nazis to the right of the German nationalist party?

2. All terms should be used carefully and not sloppily—that goes without saying. Thus, words like *"contract"*, in "Social Contract", should not have been used unless there was a precise and, I believe, legal undertaking, which (it was my impression) there was not. Words are much more important than they seem at first sight; they have a life of their own, independent of the ideas which they are meant to convey.

So words should be used in an exact sense. In a country where there is a Liberal party, the word "liberal" can only mean a member of the Liberal party, or perhaps a Liberal voter, not a large number of progressive people who support the ideas of law and order, peaceful change, experiment, etc.

3. The words "Left" and "Right" seem to me to have become, whatever their origin, used to help those who wish to see society as something mainly divided in terms of class. Now, of course, class is an important matter; but it is not the only way of looking at society, and "the class problem" is not the only (and not, in my belief, the the most important) problem in English society. The excessive use, and therefore misuse, of the language of the class struggle and of the false division Left-and-Right makes more difficult the resolution of all the other problems and actually makes the "class struggle" rather worse. What is conventionally regarded as the "Labour Right" should not have allowed themselves to be saddled with that word, for it forces them to fight in unfavourable circumstances. Nor should the Conservative party make such use of this misleading terminology.

4. Let me give one example of what I mean. One of the scandals of this country is the poor diet of the working man. This is just as important a matter as health and social services generally. Suppose I were to mount a crusade to distribute wholemeal bread instead of part of the social security benefit. Would I be regarded as, as well as a crank, left-wing or right-wing? Presumably right-wing, since I should be removing from people the right to go on poisoning themselves with the same old rubbish they too often eat. But would this action not also be interventionism and, therefore, by definition Left? Or must one distinguish some types of interventionism as left, some as right?

[11] HUGH THOMAS was until recently Professor of History at the University of Reading. A completely revised edition of his classic history of *The Spanish Civil War* was published last year by Hamish Hamilton, and in Spanish translation in Madrid just recently.

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Laurence Lerner

Dickon & David

TAMSIN PRESSED her left thumb against the metal catch, and let it squeeze the flesh inwards. Nothing happened, so she tried to press harder. The obstinacy of objects lay, as always, in front of her: she never knew whether her actions would overcome it, or slip past it, or subside exhausted. Just as her fingers were giving up she heard a click, and the bag flew open. She sighed, and moved her attention from the tired fingers to the whole shape and surface of her body. Carefully, she paid attention to the sunlight, crinkling over her skin. It was warm: the wind came off the sea, salty and fresh, but did not make her shiver. Things were not really too much trouble, in the end. She had not had to struggle long, and the bag lay open on her lap. In a few moments, she would feel strong enough to rummage inside. A warm feeling of deserved achievement washed over her.

The old man next to her was talking. He must have been talking for quite a while, because none of his sentences sounded like beginnings. It didn't matter: he would be talking about himself. If anything mattered, he would say it again. But it couldn't matter to her. This wasn't the bench she usually sat on.

"I don't usually sit on this bench", he was saying. "I walk down to the next lot. Just the right distance. I sit on the side facing the sea—if it's warm enough. But today's rather chilly." He looked at her. "Isn't it?" he added plaintively.

"It's perfectly warm", said Tamsin. "It's the warmest day we've had so far."

"I feel chilly", he said. "I didn't feel strong enough to walk to the next bench. But this one's not so comfortable." He turned laboriously to face her. "There's a hole in one of the slats", he said accusingly. "I can feel the splinters."

"I don't usually sit here", said Tamsin, "I sit in my garden. I've got a perfectly good garden." She looked out at the barren, puckered sea, flowering in little waves. "Forsythia", she said. "Anemones. And two rose bushes."

"I don't know why it is", he said. "I just didn't feel up to walking to the next bench."

She listened to the traces of his voice before speaking. "It's perfectly simple", she said. "You're too old."

"Well, I'm old. Of course I'm old. I'm older than you, I'm sure. But I'm not *too* old."

"You're not older than me", she asserted.

"Eighty-one", he said. "Eighty-one next month. My wife died ten years ago. I look after myself."

"I'll bet you don't. I'll bet your room's full of washing-up, right at this moment. Dirty dishes everywhere. On the table, or the window sill. Everywhere."

"It's not easy, doing it all. People don't realise. Not when you're over eighty. And I walk down to the sea every day. To the next bench, usually."

"I'm eighty-six", she said contemptuously. "I've got six grandchildren. One of them's a student. She digs the garden." She began looking through her handbag. She was feeling stronger now, she could run her fingers through the rustle and tumble of contents without feeling nausea.

"Students", spluttered the man. "I've got no time for students. Always up to something."

She had hold of an envelope and was

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lifting it out of the bag. But it wasn't the right one. She could feel the furry surface of paper that had been in her bag a long time.

"My neighbour's got a son", the man was saying. "You can tell he's a student. Great baggy trousers, like skirts. And hair." His breath started to come quicker and noisier. "How do you tell boys from girls nowadays?" The wheezing quickened, it joined the family of laughs. "That one's a boy all right."

Reluctantly she let go of the velvety envelope. She would have liked to take it out and stroke it a few times. But she would do that later; first she had to find the other one.

"I'll bet you don't know what my name is", he said.

Her fingers had found the stiffer corner of another envelope. It was cooler, smoother. That would be it.

"You know what my name is?" he asked again. He seemed quite prepared to say everything several times. "My Christian name?"

She let the envelope go. She could take it out soon enough, when she felt ready to read it again. She was in no hurry. The breeze touched her right cheek as she turned to look at the old man: a salty flick on the skin.

"John", she said. "Or Peter. Something like that."

He chuckled in delight. "That's what you think."

"They probably call you Jack. Or Pete." She couldn't make out the features very well, she only had the voice to go on. "Or Fred. Or even Alf, I wouldn't be surprised."

"Dickon", he said. "My name's Dickon. I bet you've never even heard that, have you?" He waited a moment, then said, more angrily, "Have you?"

"Have I what?" she said, suddenly tired.

"Dickon", he said. "Did you even know that was a name?"

THERE WERE A DOZEN or so white triangles moving over the roughened sea, two of them with red stripes. Why wasn't she in her canvas chair, on the back lawn? Yesterday she'd been sitting watching the forsythia. She could still feel in her back the moment she'd bent to pick up two or three yellow blossoms from the lawn. Her fingers had not wanted to grip firmly, one had swum idly back down on to the grass. Like that yacht, she thought, like that striped sail swimming idly over the rough water. She must have walked down here, earlier this morning. By herself?

"It's a very old name. My wife used to say, What on earth came over your Dad, to give you such a funny name? She used to think he'd made it up."

All she wanted was to watch the forsythia swaying over her head. Blurring. But she couldn't now.

"It's short for Richard. It's an old form of Dick. But Jane used to think it was made up. She was very ignorant, in some ways, was Jane. You know, even King Richard III was called Dickon. There's even a rhyme about him, I'll recite it to you if you're interested."

She took the letter out of her bag. Yes, this was the one, you could feel it had only come today, and had only been read once. She drew out the stiff paper, hearing it hiss as it rubbed against the envelope. Nice bit of paper Mary had used, no cheap rubbish. It creaked as she opened it out.

"It goes like this. Just listen now." His voice grew tauter, rose in pitch, as he prepared to recite. "Dickon of England, don't be so bold, For Dickon of England is bought and sold." He waved his hands, conducting. "That was a famous old rhyme once. It comes in Shakespeare."

He paused for effect; and the white triangles dodged and swung in the sunshine. Tamsin held the letter on her lap, gathering courage.

"My Dad was very interested in names. He used to say we ought to keep the good old names alive. We ought to know where they came from, we ought to go on using them. You know what he called my sister. Dorcas. I suppose you've never heard that one either. It's in the Bible."

"You seem very sure about what I haven't heard of."

"He didn't have any time for all these modern names, like Christine or Gladys. All this rubbish they get from the TV." He turned to her and wheezed. "I hope your name's not Gladys."

"No", she said, staring out to sea. "No, it's not."

"My daughter's called Gloria", he said in disgust. "Couldn't stop my wife. She wouldn't

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hear of any of the good old names. Tabitha, I wanted to call her. Or Edith. Or at any rate Mary. But she was very obstinate, was Jane. She kept insisting Dickon was a made-up name. You couldn't argue with her."

The letter was open on her lap but of course she couldn't read it. The words were lumpish and irregular on the page, and as she screwed up her eyes (she could never stop herself—as if that would help) they blurred and slid about. There was no way of coaxing them into shapes she could read. She would have to find her glasses.

"Takes after her mother, does Gloria. Got it in for men. You should see the dance she leads her husband. If he so much as reads the paper."

"I live with my granddaughter", said Tamsin defensively. "She's been good to me."

"Gloria, she's called. Goes to show, doesn't it?"

"She looks after the garden, she brings me my breakfast in bed. She's a good girl, is Mary. Not like the others."

"I wonder if I could get as far as the other bench. It's much more comfortable." The old man had suddenly lost interest in the conversation; he shifted restlessly on the hard slats.

"Of course she's on to a good thing." Suddenly afraid he would go away, Tamsin began to talk very fast. "I mean, the house is mine, she doesn't pay any rent. She has everything free, hot water, bedding, everything. On the telephone all day to young men, I pay it all. And she knows I'll leave it to her."

She could hear a slight choking from the old man. He was pushing with his hands against the slats, trying to get himself up. Then with a gasp he relaxed, and sat down again on the bench, looking out at the sails and the dazzle. "I ought to try", he said hopelessly.

SHE HAD FOUND her spectacles. She drew them out of her bag, and quickly pushed the bag shut. It was only last week she had spilt the whole contents of the bag on to the grass, when Mary was out. It had taken hours to find everything, and then Mary had had to help her up off the ground when she came back. But there had been no need to go on as if she'd spilt it on purpose.

The bag safely shut she had to open the spectacle case. Her right thumb had to run along the edge, then when it lifted enough she pushed her left thumb under the lid. She could feel the sting where she'd cut herself last week, trying to chop the onions. It had been to save Mary trouble, but she hadn't been at all grateful. Had told her to leave the cooking alone. Where would Mary be now, if she'd always left the cooking alone?

By now the glasses were on her nose, and she shook out the letter till it lay flat on her lap. She enjoyed the stiffness of the page, and its rigid folds; always used the best, her family. Something stirred uneasily in her head as she thought that, as if it wasn't true any more. She had a vague feeling that the letter didn't belong with the wide view, the warmth, the slight tingle of the breeze. As if it was an indoor letter, and ought to be read in bed. With the fire on, even.

Then when the words stood still, and she saw the shape that she knew said, Dear Grannie, then she remembered. It didn't matter that even with glasses the shapes were blurred, and had to be held down till they fitted a word. There was no need to read it, she knew what it said, even if she couldn't remember the exact words. And in fact, she could even remember the words. Each one, as she made it out that morning, had clung, had clipped itself to her memory. Dear Grannie, Mary had written, There's no point in beating about the bush. You know I'm on holiday with David, and he's asked me to marry him. Of course I've said Yes. I know you didn't like David but you must realise that you were prejudiced. I'm going to move in with him as soon as we get back, and we'll get married in June. So I shan't be living with you any more, Grannie. I'm sorry about this, but you must understand it was getting difficult anyway. And I don't know that you're really able to stay in the house by yourself any more. This is a real problem, and we'll have to talk about it very seriously when I get back. I'm having a wonderful time. Much love, Mary.

The old man had managed to stand up, swaying slightly. "Well", he said, "I'll be going now. I don't think I'll walk to the next bench after all, it seems far enough to get home." He turned towards her, blotting out

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the sails. "And remember", he said, "you can tell people you've met someone called Dickon."

She looked up at him, suddenly hearing very distinctly everything he was saying. "Listen", she said, "do you know what *my* name is?" She had seized hold of his arms, and was pulling herself up. "It's Tamsin." She was surprised at how easily she got up, till she realised that she was pulling him down. "It's a Cornish form, the name is Thomasin. It's quite as old as Dickon." He collapsed heavily on to the bench beside her, just managing to turn enough to sit down and not fall face forwards. "But it's no use keeping the old names, you can't stop fashion. Now they all call their daughters June. I ask you. Or Lorna."

"Or Gloria", he panted.

"Or Gloria. Or they call boys David. I ask you. Sounds old because it comes in the Bible, but it isn't. No one ever called their boys David till nowadays. It's a fake name, that's what it is, a fraud." She turned it over in her mouth, and spat it out at the sea. "David. David."

Leda

I don't know why:
I look at the things I can do,
the smoke-mist blowing
across the river and myself
on the other side.

Such small things under my nose:
a moorhen running across water,
insects which fly on it and stay dry;
whatever happens deep in the reeds
to splash or flutter
on one choked cry.

There is a need to stay close here
avoiding that swan who drifts through
with her head above all this,
held as though
the world gives her everything.

When I come back to you
I want to know where you were,
who you were with
and what you felt about it there:
what are you anyway?

The things I do are nothing;
down here your hair points
to the sea like Ophelia's
and something probes the cracks
between those eyes.

But stay here:
I promise I won't drown you with me
if you, in turn, remember
that I will never fly.

Edwin Brock

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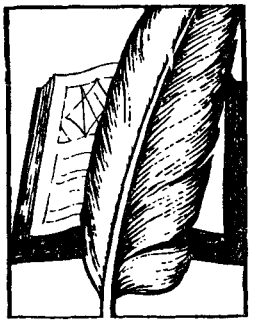

Column

IT IS NOT often that, in the stagnant pools of English literary life, any book causes quite so much fuss and commotion as Mr David Pryce-Jones's book, *Unity Mitford: A Quest*.[1] And normally one would expect both author and publisher to be delighted at receiving so much free publicity; but in this case I doubt whether this is so because much of the publicity has been of a peculiarly unpleasant kind. It is not simply that reviewers have taken Mr Pryce-Jones to task, in my opinion rightly, for writing a bad book; many people write bad books without provoking the storm of censure which has descended upon Mr Pryce-Jones. It is that the criticism has been of a strangely personal kind and directed not so much against the book as against Mr Pryce-Jones himself, as if he had offended not so much against literary as against moral standards. And it is not only Mr Pryce-Jones who has come under attack, but his publisher, George Weidenfeld, as if the fact that the book had come out under his imprint only made matters worse.

Consider, for instance, a passage from a review by Lord Lambton, in *The Spectator*.

> But now Lord Weidenfeld, recently ennobled for politeness to Sir Harold Wilson and Lady Falkender, has published a book, attempting to pin political responsibility upon a reckless young girl and, when its mis-statements and misquotations were resented, defended publication on the grounds that the British upper classes were responsible for inclining Hitler towards his Jewish atrocities. This seems to me unforgivable. It is said in defence of Lord Weidenfeld that he does not enjoy reading. This is unfair, but his full-time occupation of genuflecting and sycophanting to every notable, and visiting notable in England, swirling daily through the drawing rooms of London in a series of palais glides, whispering obsequiously, leaves him breathless for such a mundane task. Rather does he deal with books as a butcher with joints of meat: his sole consideration, the clearance of his stocks.

This seems to me to introduce a new and highly undesirable note into literary controversy. English reviewers on the whole observe certain decencies and proprieties which, while they make things rather dull, at least make literary life less intolerable than it otherwise would be. Lord Lambton clearly has no use for such conventions; but I hope that his aristocratic dash into the field of reviewing does not find many imitators. If it does, writers will find themselves faced with a new hazard, in addition to all the others which now confront them. Must we now take care to ensure that our books are in the hands of publishers who come up to Lord Lambton's high standards of propriety? And if we do not, shall we, through guilt by association, like Mr Pryce-Jones invoke the condemnation of so severe a censor as Lord Lambton has now revealed himself to be?

Lord Lambton's review seems a quite extravagant case of over-reaction to what he himself describes as "a shoddy, inaccurate, dull little book." Can it really be so dull if it produces such violent passions in Lord Lambton's noble breast?

There is something odd about all this, just as there is about many of the hostile reviews which Mr Pryce-Jones's book has inspired. And just as Lord Lambton thinks it relevant to his opinion of the book that we should know what he thinks about Lord Weidenfeld, so others seem equally driven by irrational compulsion to introduce absurd irrelevancies into their reviews. Why on earth does Mr Alastair Forbes, in a long review in the *Times Literary Supplement*, think it necessary or illuminating to tell us that Mr Pryce-Jones's father is "more fastidious and balanced a man of letters and the world" than his son, or that one of Mr Forbes's own sisters "was sent to prison for snatching a Jewish child from a Vichy policeman (whom she locked in the loo)"? A kind of collective madness seems to have seized upon such reviewers in what the *Evening Standard* characteristically calls the "immensely enjoyable row surrounding David Pryce-Jones's book on Unity Mitford", referring in a subsequent issue to the "discreet campaign" against the book, of which Mr Pryce-Jones has been the victim.

ONE REMAINS PUZZLED and perplexed. Mr Pryce-Jones and Lord Weidenfeld have clearly made some kind of mistake, though precisely what kind of mistake, given the complications of English life is very hard to say. One can of course understand and, given what happened to Unity Mitford, sympathise with the pain and anger of her family at finding her the subject of such a book as Mr Pryce-Jones has chosen to write. And yet I think it fair to bear in mind the truth of President Truman's immortal remark that if you don't like the heat you should stay out of the kitchen. Unity Mitford loved the heat and longed to be in the kitchen, even though it was a Hell's kitchen which she chose. She became marginally, yet passionately, involved in a great historical tragedy, and with a great historical monster, and in doing so made herself a legitimate object of

[1] *Unity Mitford: A Quest*. By DAVID PRYCE-JONES. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £6.50.

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public interest. But not perhaps the kind of interest which Mr Pryce-Jones has shown.

He has, in fact, in his book, made three mistakes. The first is, quite simply, that it is far too long, and, as far as her public life is concerned, enormously exaggerates the importance of his subject. He tells us that his interest in her was aroused as a result of becoming a tenant of her sister Jessica's flat in Berkeley, California; one slightly has the feeling that at that moment some Bad Fairy laid her finger on Mr Pryce-Jones and that her touch remained throughout all his labours on his book. Indeed, one almost feels that he fell in love with his subject, and much of his book, with its obsessive interest in totally trivial detail, reads like the work of a frustrated lover. Otherwise why should he devote some 270 pages to someone on the margin of history who was worth, at the most, a long essay?

Mr Pryce-Jones's second mistake was to enter on his Quest for Unity Mitford inadequately prepared, like some explorer without the right equipment and provisions for a dangerous journey. The Mitford family, like some savage tribe which resents the intrusion of strangers, understandably refused assistance in raising the ghost of their sister from the dead; and this should perhaps have been enough to prevent him from venturing further into such hostile country. Instead, as if to outflank it, he entrusted himself to the treacherous waters of instant history; that is to say, of interviewing some 200 miscellaneous friends and acquaintances of Unity Mitford's who told him whatever happened to come into their heads, some 35 years after any of them had known her, of what they remembered about her. Such a method of writing history or biography does not produce very good results; memory is notoriously the most undependable of sources. One might as well, writing a biography of Napoleon, have interviewed that veteran of the *Grande Armée*, the sole living French survivor of the battle of Borodino, who on his hundredth birthday assured his listeners that of course he had often seen Napoleon on the retreat from Moscow, and he was a very tall, big man with a long white beard.

A very small amount of historical knowledge tells us that there was something wrong about that. Unfortunately, Mr Pryce-Jones seems to know very little about either the English or the German stages on which Unity Mitford played out her short life. What he offers instead is speculation based on very little evidence, combined with the hindsight of the conventional historical wisdom which has established itself since World War II. In particular, he appears to have only a superficial knowledge of what life was actually like in National Socialist Germany before the war, and this is rather a handicap in trying to understand and explain how Unity Mitford found in the Third Reich the Land of Heart's Desire.

But these, alas, are quite ordinary and common mistakes, which many writers commit; they are not the kind of fault which normally attracts the stern and critical eye of Lord Lambton, provokes headlines in the newspapers, and inspires "highly enjoyable rows", and "discreet campaigns" of denunciation. But unfortunately, from his own point of view, Mr Pryce-Jones has also committed another, and a different kind of mistake, which is to touch on one of those small and ugly sore spots which are, or were, a hidden irritant in English society, and in doing so he has inflamed it again, re-opened old scars and wounds, and revived almost forgotten memories of hatred and ill-will.

I MEAN OF COURSE that old sore of anti-Semitism, which was responsible for the ugliest aspect of Unity Mitford's life. Having chosen her as his subject, it would have been impossible for Mr Pryce-Jones to have done her any kind of justice if he had not paid due attention to the part which anti-Semitism played in her life. She held to that abominable faith so violently, it provoked her to such bizarre and detestable outbreaks of hatred and rage, that one is tempted to think it may perhaps have been the only thing about her that deserved to be taken seriously; it was really a case for treatment. But in telling her story Mr Pryce-Jones has somehow made it possible, even natural, for the reader to assume that her anti-Semitism was in some way a natural product of the way in which she was brought up, and in which other children of her class were brought up, so that the taint of it clings to all those with whom she was associated. This is, of course, a wholly indefensible proposition, and today it conjures up such terrible memories of torture, persecution, and extermination that it is rightly resented by anyone to whom it might be thought to apply.

To say this, however, is not to deny that anti-Semitism, of a peculiarly native variety, was before the War widely spread in English society. Anyone who remembers the 1930s will also remember that at parties, at dinner tables, in country houses, he was likely to hear, from otherwise sensitive and civilised persons, remarks reflecting an anti-Semitism which was as natural to them as the English air they breathed. And yet such remarks were not confined to any particular social class; they might be heard just as often, perhaps more often, in the saloon bar or the working men's club as in a ducal mansion, and indeed, in their very Englishness, they might

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be taken as the expression of feelings which united rather than divided classes. They were a reflection of the deep-seated barbarism which exists in English life side by side with its civilisation.

This particular kind of anti-Semitism, however, was not a political force of any kind. When Sir Oswald Mosley tried to exploit it for political purposes, his efforts met with almost total failure, and in so far as they did, their success was achieved among the *lumpenproletariat* rather than the class to which Mosley himself belonged. Of Mosley himself perhaps the worst thing one could say is that he was not himself anti-Semitic but used the anti-Semitism of others in the hope of gaining popularity for Fascism in this country. and of winning the sympathy and benevolent support of its infinitely more successful, formidable and powerful counterpart in Germany. Mr Pryce-Jones's book tends to confuse and obscure rather than to define the differences between the English and German versions of anti-Semitism. Perhaps this also partly explains the resentment it has caused.

HOW THEN IS ONE to explain the extraordinary virulence with which the infection of anti-Semitism seized upon an English girl like Unity Mitford? Partly, perhaps, because of the sheer dumb ignorance which made it possible for her to share the same beliefs as the boxer Ted Kid Lewis. Partly also, no doubt, the influence of Mosley and, very much more, her infatuation with Hitler. Really to please Hitler, it was necessary to be as anti-Semitic as he was, for in a sense anti-Semitism was the only thing which Hitler believed in, if he ever really did believe in anything. There was nothing Unity Mitford would not have done to please Hitler, except, as she showed by her attempted suicide in Munich, to renounce her own country.

But perhaps there is an entirely different kind of explanation which accounts very much better for her behaviour. In the London of the '30s there were a number of well-born young girls who were, in a rather muddle-headed fashion, trying to achieve some kind of emancipation. Some of them were very pretty, and were some of the more decorative features of the London scene. They had a special charm because they had never been marred by education and had the kind of freshness and spontaneity which one associates with *das Ewig-Weibliche*; often they were very funny, because they saw what was absurd in things which everyone else took for granted.

They were the younger sisters of the Bright Young Things of the 1920s, and they all chose different ways of achieving the emancipation to which they aspired. Some chose sex, some chose drugs, some chose Art, some chose drink, some chose the wilder shores of love, and some chose all of them, at once or in succession; and increasingly, because politics were the thing in the '30s, some chose politics, always of the extremes, and then they were apt to become bores and lose their original charm. They played so many variations that it was difficult to believe that somewhere there was a single theme; and yet they belonged so recognisably to a single type that one had to believe they had something in common, besides class, upbringing, and some kind of private income or allowance.

ONE OF Mr Pryce-Jones's 200 witnesses says of herself and Unity Mitford that "the whole idea was to annoy one's parents, *épater la bourgeoisie*." What a very odd conjunction of phrases! For surely the whole point about the Redesdales was that they were not *la bourgeoisie*. The delinquent girls of the 1930s had no desire to shock the bourgeois, because they had never met any of them and knew nothing about them. You had to be one of the bourgeois yourself, like Flaubert, if you want to shock them. But shocking, or annoying, one's parents was something different, and these girls had a particular reason for doing so. They lived between two wars, and were still close enough to the last one to feel dimly that Mummy and Daddy were somehow associated with something monstrous and horrible. They were part of the world that had made the War, they had assisted in it, fought in it, in some cases actually enjoyed it, and somehow it was necessary to say one wanted to have nothing to do with it.

Mr Pryce-Jones, I think, would have come nearer to the truth about his subject if he had regarded Unity Mitford's political activities, not as of any significance in themselves, but simply as a variation of the particular kind of Generation Game which was played in the 1930s. Certainly, it was a peculiarly ugly variant and she herself would have to be regarded as an extreme case, a player who did not quite obey the rules. But in that, surely, would lie her interest.

She was, in any case, and by her own hand, quite adequately punished for her excesses both of love and of hate. At the end of all the "enormously enjoyable row" and the "discreet campaign" I cannot help thinking that it would have been best of all if Mr Pryce-Jones had allowed the sad shade of Unity Mitford to rest in peace. She played after all only a minuscule and peripheral part in the terrible events of her short lifetime. To bring her back from the grave is to revive for those close to her so many painful memories that it could have been justified, if at all, only by writing a truly illuminating book.

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Nietzsche & the Idea of Metaphor

By J. P. Stern

". . . were it not that I have bad dreams."
HAMLET *(II/2)*

HOW ARE WE to read Nietzsche? How are we to understand the characteristic style of his philosophising and the mode of language in which it is cast? Two important circumstances of his biography offer a possible start.

The first is the fact that his creative life is confined to the astonishingly short period of about sixteen years, from 1872 (when, at the age of 28, he published *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*) to January 1889, when he wrote the last pathetic letters and postcards to his friends, and was taken from his Turin lodgings by the ever-faithful Franz Overbeck, to spend the remaining twelve years of his life, mindless, confined, in the hideous care of his sister. He tended to see his writings now as a single venture in the apparently absolute freedom of uncommitted philosophical speculation, now again as purposeful critical thinking about the state of Western mankind in an age of decadence, as reflection consistently committed to a number of concrete moral and existential concerns (though these are not the terms he himself would have used).

And these are the ways we must approach his work. We can see that his philosophising begins by taking issue with, and remains grounded in, the contemporary cultural situation of the Second German Reich founded in 1871, and that his care for the contemporary world and his critique of it are not so very different from the concern and critique of writers like Karl Marx, Thomas Carlyle, and Matthew Arnold[1] (and again these are comparisons he would have scorned). But we can also see that he tried to rid himself of the burden of criticism and strove for a greater freedom.

The second circumstance that needs recalling is simply his immense, all-consuming passion for *writing*, is the fact that we cannot imagine what his "thought" would look like without its very particular, highly purposeful wordings (as we can imagine the thought of Descartes, or Kant). From the days of his solitary boyhood onwards, even when (writing to his sister or mother or aunt) he has no more to communicate than his observations on the progress of the seasons or the content of a school lesson, this love of writing dominates his hours and days. And from his adolescent years at Schulpforta to the end of his conscious life, writing remains inextricably connected with that endless series of migraines, stomach cramps and colics, and states of near-blindness from which no single week was wholly free[2]—a grace and a deliverance nevertheless. Writing had for him strong compensatory erotic overtones (which it is the foolish prejudice of French structuralists to identify with sexuality); but so has all creativeness. What distinguishes his books, apart from their intellectual energy, is his passion for shapeliness, balance, and clarity *over brief stretches of prose.* Nietzsche loathed the idea of democracy in all its forms; yet his utmost concern with intelligibility is present in almost every sentence he wrote. To find him accused of "obscurantist" and "élitist" tendencies by Marxist detractors whose own prose is rendered inaccessible by wilful mannerisms and obscurities to all but the smallest circle of initiates is one of the many ironies that make up the posthumous fate of his writings.

VALUE JUDGMENTS adhere to Nietzsche's every thought. It is the characteristic style of his philosophising to infuse every one of his insights—whether they be philosophical or psychological, moral or historical or even physiological—with his personal value judgments, to pose questions as searching as he can make them, to offer no more than provisional, hypothetical or perspectivist answers, to impose further questions on these, and to pour suspicion on all static resolutions. Because so much of the man is in the thinking, the destructive treatment

[1] Nietzsche knew nothing of Arnold nor, surprisingly, of Marx. Carlyle (see *Götzendämmerung*) was one of his pet hates.

[2] Karl Jaspers, *Nietzsche: Einführung in das Verständnis seines Philosophierens* (Berlin, 1947), pp. 91–101.

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to which he often subjects his own earlier arguments is self-destructive, too. But, then, he was hardly ever intent on his own or his readers' peace of mind; nor did he succeed in creating a "system of opinions", let alone an ideology, although in that fragmentary collection of notes and excerpts to which at the end of his conscious life he gave several titles, among them *The Will to Power*, he planned to do just that. It is characteristic of him as it is of few other philosophers that he distrusted "the will to system" as a sign of defective intellectual integrity, and yet his work is rich in continuities and abiding concerns. The three I shall single out here seem at first sight to have little in common, but I hope to show that they are in fact closely related:

1. How seriously are we to take the life of men in the world?
2. What is the function of the aesthetic in life?
3. How is the modern fragmentation of knowledge —the division of areas of knowledge which to Nietzsche are always areas of experience—to be overcome?

From the ever-renewed attempts at exploring these questions Nietzsche brings back a number of insights which are more penetrating and which throw a more brilliant light on various aspects of our experience than more systematic and "scientific" thinkers have done. His work is open, in every sense unconcluded. The points at which he stopped writing, and we stop thinking out what he wrote, are apt to be arbitrary: the game of philosophical leapfrog on which he was engaged is endless, "eternal."

IN 1873 (a year after *The Birth of Tragedy*) Nietzsche dictated to his old school-friend, Carl von Gersdorff, an essay entitled "On Truth and Falsehood in an Extra-Moral Sense."[3] Although this is only a short essay of 15 pages, which Nietzsche hardly corrected and which was not published until 1903, it is probably the longest single piece on a traditional "philosophical" subject he ever wrote. Its subject is the metaphysics of language. I shall examine it here in some detail, partly for its own sake and partly also as a sort of seed-box of later arguments, relating my consideration of it to a number of much later reflections and *aperçus* in order to show—or at least to offer some evidence for suggesting—that this early essay not only charts the area of a life-long concern, but also helps us by its own example to understand that manner and style which we recognise as Nietzsche's own mode of philosophising.

The purpose of this early essay was to elucidate a linguistic variant of Kantian criticism. (This is not to say that Nietzsche's re-interpretation in terms of language owes anything to Kant, whose linguistic views had been entirely naive and uncritical.) Kant had maintained that we are incapable of unmediated knowledge of whatever is outside ourselves—of "things in themselves"—since we know these things only under the forms of our perception; and Kant's position had traditionally been exaggerated, indeed falsified, to the point where it amounted to a denial of the possibility of any reliable knowledge, and to the assertion of a radical subjectivism. Similarly, Nietzsche claims that language, far from giving us a true account of things as they are in the world, and far from having its grounds in "true reality", is in fact no more than a referentially unreliable set of almost entirely arbitrary signs, made up by us for various very concrete and practical ends, mainly to do with the safeguarding of life and the preservation of the species. And whereas we like to think that the value of language is commensurate with the amount of truth about the world it secures for us, its real value to us is merely a pragmatic one, having to do with whether or not it works. The function of language is related to what Nietzsche in the second of *Thoughts out of Season* calls "the hygiene of life."[4] Its principal function is to hide the hostile nature of the universe from men in order to preserve them from destruction—at least for a little while. Therefore *the lie*—the lie about what the universe is really like—is not a contingent aspect of language, but its very essence. The lie of language in an "*extra-moral sense*" (as the title of the essay puts it) consists in the vital pretence that language is able to relate the world of men to some wider, benevolent cosmic scheme by offering them reliable knowledge of that scheme (whereas the universe can get on perfectly well without the world of men and is merely waiting for an opportunity to continue on its desolate journey through man-less aeons). The "*moral*" sense of lying, on the other hand, is confined to violating the linguistic, lexical or semantic conventions men have set up in order to get on with each other as best they may. There is no knowledge of a world beyond our world—all statements pretending to such knowledge are false, whereas all statements claiming to be true accounts of our world are mere tautology:

> If someone hides a thing behind a bush, looks for it there and indeed finds it, then such searching and

[3] FN, *Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (ed. Colli and Montinari, Berlin, 1973), III/ii, pp. 369–84. As far as I know, no English translation of the essay exists, though an excerpt from it is contained in *The Portable Nietzsche* (ed. Walter Kaufmann, 1973), pp. 42–7.

[4] *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen* II, §10: "Eine Gesundheitslehre des Lebens. . . ."

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finding is nothing very praiseworthy: but that precisely is what the searching and finding of "truth" within the realm of reason amounts to.

Wenn jemand ein Ding hinter einem Busche versteckt, es ebendort wieder sucht und auch findet, so ist an diesem Suchen und Finden nicht viel zu rühmen: so aber steht es mit dem Suchen und Finden der "Wahrheit" innerhalb des Vernunft-Bezirkes.

One may, incidentally, wonder how men, said to be incapable of knowing anything about the universe in which their world is travelling, nevertheless "know" that it is malevolent, destructive and desolate. The answer to that question is contained in Nietzsche's first book, *The Death of Tragedy*, where a pre-rational, instinctive intuition of primal suffering and fear is postulated as the grounding, "*der Urgrund*", of humanity.

HOW, THEN, IF we are incapable of positive contact with the real world, can we sustain life? How is it that the world works? The world works on an illusion, an "*as if*—" principle. We act in the world as if we were in touch with a benevolent reality, as if we were capable of comprehending its cosmic purpose, as if there were a divinity whose decrees we fulfil and who gives meaning to our individual lives—as if God were alive.[5]

While we establish and try to stabilise this *as if* relationship through language, the functions of language nevertheless remain *ad hoc* and its uses largely arbitrary. Between words and things there is not a direct relationship (things are in no sense the causes of words); and yet the two are not completely unrelated, for words are said to be the distant and distorted echoes of sense-perceptions. These rudimentary elements are poeticised and given coherence according to rules which are entirely "created" or invented by man. Thus the relationship that obtains between words and "the real world" is a metaphorical or aesthetic one. Man, as the Idealist philosophers saw him—that is, man as the unstable and arbitrary perceiving subject of an objective world—is re-interpreted in Nietzsche's scheme as man the creator of language. The relationship obtains between subject and object—between human language and the real things in the world from which language is excluded—is not a casual relationship, for between two such heterogeneous things as subject and object no direct relationship can exist [*denn zwischen zwei absolut verschiedenen Sphären wie zwischen Subjekt und Objekt gibt es keine Kausalität, keine Richtigkeit, keinen Ausdruck*...]. It is not mimetic or expressive, but what Nietzsche calls an "aesthetic attitude."

> ... I mean an intimatory transference, a sort of halting, stammering translation into an entirely foreign language: for which purpose we need a freely poeticising, a freely inventive middle sphere and middle faculty.
>
> ... *sondern höchstens ein* ästhetisches *Verhalten, ich meine eine andeutende Übertragung, eine nachstammelnde Übersetzung in eine ganz fremde Sprache: wozu es aber jedenfalls einer frei dichtenden und frei erfindenden Mittelsphäre und Mittelkraft bedarf.*

The designation of these words—"a middle sphere and middle faculty"—is, as we shall see, more self-revealing than Nietzsche is likely to have intended. This "poeticising translation into an entirely foreign language" Nietzsche now likens to the production of Chladny's

[5] This "*as if*–" mode enters Nietzsche's style, or rather the many styles he acknowledged as his own, at the most intimate and instinctive level of his writing, sometimes to its detriment. For while it is true that all he wrote is distinguished by a splendid liveliness and adaptability to the purpose in hand, a curious mannerism escapes his conscious control. It is his very frequent and often redundant use of the particle "*als*", meaning "as", "in the role or function of. . . ."

There is no need to recur to the tedium of "stylo-statistical" word counts in order to note whole paragraphs, especially in the early writings, where his use of this particle is impossible to justify on grammatical or stylistic grounds. This linguistic tic is not meaningless. What it signifies, to excess, is an instinctive, monotonous re-enacting of a fundamental movement of Nietzsche's thought: a movement in which a never-ending interchange in the function of words (metaphorical intimations of divers spheres of experience) is allowed to become the dominant feature of language (the metaphorically inexact intimation of our being in the world).

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figures, which are obtained by playing the bow of a violin against a board of very thin plywood covered with fine sand; the regular geometrical patterns into which the grains of sand arrange themselves thus reflect or reproduce the vibrations of the music. These figures are, as it were, metaphorical representations of the music—metaphors of a metaphor. But, on the other hand, it would be absurd to claim that you can tell from these patterns what it is that men mean by the word "tone", let alone that from these patterns they can tell anything about the nature of music.

THIS PICTURESQUE YET ACCURATE image aptly illustrates Nietzsche's historical situation. We note his predilection for an analogy drawn from the realm of the natural sciences—it is, as always, a not very sophisticated bit of science—such as was fashionable in the heyday of the scientific ideology. And we seem to be left with the impression that in order to explain the mental operation involved in the creation of language, all we need do is translate the mechanical causality of Chladny's figures into the sphere of mind.

A good many of the psychological insights and reflections in the books of Nietzsche's most mature period—especially in *Beyond Good and Evil* and its sequel, *The Genealogy of Morals*—are founded in analogies which involve just such a psycho-physical causality, so much so that it looks as though Nietzsche were on the point of accepting one of the mechanistic and materialist psychologies current at the time. Almost the opposite is the case. By pointing to Chladny's sound patterns, and to the fact that whatever else they do, they do *not* explain what music is, Nietzsche is in fact showing how inadequate the analogy—the argument from metaphor—really is, and thus pointing to the break between the psychic and the physical, between mechanical purpose and human meaning.[6]

THE SYSTEM SKETCHED OUT in Nietzsche's essay is a system not without meaning, but meaningful only in itself. The way Nietzsche chooses to describe this system (and it may be recalled that he started life as a classical philologist) is by saying that words do not designate things and are not little labels stuck on to things, but are *metaphors* for real things in the world.

> What then is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymics, anthropomorphisms—in short, a sum of human relations which, poetically and rhetorically intensified, became transposed and adorned, and which after long usage by a people seem fixed, canonical and binding on them. Truths are illusions which one has forgotten *are* illusions—
>
> *Was ist also Wahrheit? Ein bewegliches Heer von Metaphern, Metonymien, Anthropomorphismen, kurz eine Summe von menschlichen Relationen, die poetisch und rhetorisch gesteigert, übertragen, geschmückt wurden und die nach langem Gebrauch einem Volke fest, kanonisch und verbindlich dünken: die Wahrheiten sind Illusionen, von denen man vergessen hat, dass sie welche sind. . . .*

If, so far, the passage was cast in the form of a fairly neutral *constatation*, now the point has been reached where Nietzsche can no longer let go without using the entire energy of his style to thrust a heavy value-judgment over the whole argument.

> Truths are illusions which one has forgotten *are* illusions, worn-out metaphors which have become powerless to affect the senses, coins which have their obverse effaced and are now no longer of account as coins but merely as metal.
>
> *. . . die Wahrheiten sind Illusionen, von denen man vergessen hat, dass sie welche sind, Metaphern, die abgenutzt und sinnlich kraftlos geworden sind, Münzen, die ihr Bild verloren haben und nun als Metall, nicht mehr als Münzen in Betracht kommen.*

Certainly there is no need to emphasise the powerful imagination at work in this metaphorical account of the nature of metaphors, an imagination that points to and intimates rather than sets out to prove its insights. (In this respect, at all events, Nietzsche seems to agree with Schopenhauer, who had claimed that "*erweisen*" rather than "*beweisen*" was philosophy's proper task.) What is less obvious is the way this passage, and the essay as a whole, illuminates the nature of Nietzsche's own philosophical project, and could help us to come to a fuller understanding of it.

LET ME NOW DRAW some of the implications inherent in this metaphysical fiction and in the later arguments that grow out of it.

1. The essay does not offer a radical criticism of the language of universal and metaphysical concepts in the way that, for example, Wittgenstein's work does. It sanctions generalisations and conceptual statements of every kind—metaphysical or empirical—as a part of that complex system of linguistic conventions by

[6] "We feel", writes Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*, 6.52, "that even when all *possible* scientific questions have been answered, our problems of life have still not been touched at all."

This is not the only point where Nietzsche's and Wittgenstein's thinking come together. The *Tractatus* is another scheme in which a parallel is established between the propositions of language and "the logical form of reality" (4.12 ff). And in the *Tractatus*, too, this relationship is not simply "representative" but remains indeterminate, though it is not "aesthetic" in Nietzsche's sense.

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means of which men are enabled to live in the world. Concepts (as Nietzsche writes in the concluding section) are not fundamentally different from other aspects of our language. He likens them to dice—"they are made of hard bone . . . octagonal and negotiable, like dice . . . but even as such they are the residue of metaphors", that is, of sense-impressions translated into particular names.

When Nietzsche likens concepts to coin (money), he illuminates their nature in much the same way as the young Marx had illuminated the nature of money (coin) by likening it to concepts and thus identifying the function of coin as that of a mediator between men and the goods they would have, their "*demande.*"[7] But whereas Marx's ultimate aim is to subject the metaphorical shift to radical criticism, Nietzsche accepts it as part of "the lie" and thus as the *donnée* of our situation in the world.

Yet at the same time we note that, although Nietzsche shows how "the language of science", too, springs from the common ground of metaphor, none of the important passages in the essay itself is cast in the language of concepts and "*Wissenschaft.*" Again, Nietzsche does not criticise the Kantian and Schopenhauerian notion of "the things in themselves" beyond saying that for us they are convenient because life-sustaining fictions. Without these fictions we would be victims of the paralysing spell which an unmediated expectation of suffering casts over us. Or, to put it in the succinct phrase of one of the fragments from *Der Wille zur Macht*, it is the function of language to turn all the transient phenomena of the world—all "becoming"—by means of a lie into "being" (*dem Werden den Charakter des Seins aufzuprägen*).

YET HOW CAN WE EVER SPEAK of "fiction", "myth" and "lies" without implying some kind of truth? "Truth", for us, may be no more than the agreement to play a game of dice in a certain way, to count the spots on the die always in the same way, and we may hardly ever cease to be aware that "for us, [truth] can be no more than . . . ." But does the formulation, "for us", not imply that there must be something other, something more. . . ?

2. By identifying it with "a mobile army of metaphors", Nietzsche proposes to consider language primarily as an aesthetic phenomenon. But the "system" he creates—or rather intimates—is quite unlike other, more traditional, aesthetic systems, beginning with that of Kant's teacher, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (the first to use the term "aesthetics" in our sense), through Schiller to Schopenhauer.

Nietzsche's sketches for such a "system" differ from all these in being tied to an historical dimension. Its changing nature—that is, its historicity—is built into this scheme by means of its very formulations. He speaks of the "long usage" in the course of which words become "fixed, canonical and binding on" a people. Metaphors become "hard" and "rigid", or again they wear out and "lose their sensuous power." Images are effaced and cease to be valid. . . . In all this there is change, movement, a course of history. It is a process which runs all one way, from pristine freshness to ossification, decadence, and an apocalyptic ending. And this is indeed the way Nietzsche saw European history from the golden age of pre-Socratic Greece to his own day and to the early 20th century as he prophetically envisaged it.

The German literary tradition from Hölderlin through Heine to Stefan George, Karl Kraus and beyond is full of such apocalyptic visions, in which moral prophecy combines in strange ways with a destructive, Samsonist intent.[8] Nietzsche's catastrophe-mindedness, too, entails a powerfully negative evaluation of each subsequent historical stage; but—and this is inherent in his value judgments—it also entails an unequivocal condemnation of everything that is "fixed, canonical, and binding", *because it is hostile to "life."* Being is, we recall, the lie imposed on becoming. Words make no sense unless they are arranged in a way that makes them "fixed, canonical, and binding"; yet once they are so arranged, they cease to communicate with "life." To place this paradox in a wider Nietzschean context: the regularisation of the elements of language is condemned as an aspect of the institutionalisation of all individual experience.

AND HERE WE COME TO an all-pervasive and, I think, unacceptable limitation of Nietzsche's thinking. He is fundamentally uninterested in, and often undiscriminatingly hostile to, what we may call *the sphere of association.*

By this I mean that in all his philosophising he has nothing really positive to say about, and much suspicion of, all those human endeavours—in

[7] See Marx's section on money—in the *Paris MSS* (*Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte*) of 1844 (rororo ed. 1966), pp. 103–7—which includes the famous quotation from *Faust I:* "Doch alles, was ich frisch geniesse,/ Ist das drum weniger mein?" and from *Timon of Athens:* "What is here?/Gold? Yellow glittering, precious gold?"

For a stimulating, if frequently bizarre, discussion of some of the philosophical problems of metaphor, including Nietzsche's "effaced coin", see Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy" in the *Metaphor* number of *New Literary History* (Autumn 1974).

[8] See J. P. Stern, *Re-interpretations: Seven Studies in 19th Century German Literature* (1964).

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society, art and religion, in morality, even in the sciences—whereby single discrete insights and experiences are transfixed, stabilised, and made reliable by means of rules and laws and institutions. He sees man's search for stability almost always only as an arrest of experience, an inauthentic pursuit, a fear of solitude, a failure of independence and courage, a defection from the heroic acceptance of singularity. It is not merely that in the dialectic which lies at the core of all human experience he always favours the unique against repetition, genius against justice, but that he hardly admits the presence of a genuine dialectic, of an authentic human problem. Nietzsche has written splendidly on Goethe, and seems to have understood more finely than others the nature of Goethe's poetic genius and humanity. Yet for Goethe's love of custom and habit, for his ability to hallow the everyday and thereby give it lasting value—

O, gedenke denn auch, wie aus dem Keim der Bekanntschaft
Nach und nach in uns holde Gewohnheit entspross

—for this mode of being Nietzsche shows no spontaneous understanding at all. Among the reasons why he is so ready to assign to the aesthetic activity a central role in human existence is his understanding of it as a mode of experience which more than any other mode escapes the sphere of association and lives by the appearance of uniqueness. Its true celebrant is not Goethe but Rilke:

Once
Each thing but **once**. **Once** *and no more. And we also*
are **once**. *Never again. . . .*

Ein *Mal*
jedes, nur **ein** *Mal.* **Ein** *Mal und nichtmehr. Und wir auch*
ein *Mal. Nie wieder. . . .* [9]

Nietzsche's consistent rejections of the sphere of association form an important limitation of his philosophical thinking. It is the most disturbing of his limitations, because it is breached by no dialectic of questions and hypothetical answers, by no speculative experiments. Moreover, in this attitude he is himself in no way original, in no way "the unique event and exception" in the culture of his country: here he forms part of a dominant German tradition that goes back to Martin Luther and perhaps beyond.

3. In speaking of language as a dynamic system of signs with an inherent organisation of meanings, Nietzsche goes in some ways beyond the traditional linguistics of his period—the theory which looks on all words as static names of things. Though he does not anticipate Saussure's insight,[10] on which modern linguistics is founded, that the elements of language cannot be physically described (Chladny's figures illustrate a causal relationship of sorts), yet he argues throughout on the assumption that these elements receive their particular meanings only from the determining contexts in which they occur. But is there anything beyond these contexts? In trying to answer this question, we come to the characteristic turn of the argument. By calling it "an army of *metaphors*", Nietzsche implies a non-metaphorical order of things to which language does not belong, but to which it is somehow—"aesthetically", by way of a "halting, stammering" translation—related.

That there is a non-metaphorical, "true", or perhaps numinous order of things, to which language does not belong, was the central metaphysical (and Schopenhauerian) claim on which *The Birth of Tragedy* was founded. The anti-Socratic attitude, central to that book, culminated in an attack on all language-dominated cultures. Sixteen years later in *The Twilight of the Idols*, at the end of Nietzsche's meteoric course, he writes in that tone of fatal bravado characteristic of his last reflections, under the heading "From a Moral Theory for the Deaf and Dumb, and Other Philosophers":

> We do not set high enough a value on ourselves when we communicate what is in our minds. Our real experiences are not at all garrulous. They couldn't communicate themselves, even if they wished to. That is because they lack the right word. Whatever we have words for, we have already outgrown. In all talk there is a grain of contempt. Language, it seems, has been invented only for the average, for the middling and communicable. Language vulgarizes the speaker.
>
> *Wir schätzen uns nicht genug, wenn wir uns mitteilen. Unsre eigentlichen Erlebnisse sind ganz und gar nicht geschwätzig. Sie könnten sich selbst nicht mitteilen, wenn sie wollten. Das macht, es fehlt ihnen das Wort. Wofür wir Worte haben, darüber sind wir schon hinaus. In allem Reden liegt ein Gran Verachtung. Die Sprache, scheint es, ist nur für Durchschnittliches, Mittleres, Mitteilsames erfunden. Mit der Sprache vulgarisiert sich bereits der Sprechende.*

How then should he convey his vision of the metaphysics of language, his conviction that "man is a rope, tied between animal and superman" and that "what may be loved in man is that he is a transition"? There is no direct way of doing it; and yet Nietzsche does not believe (with Wittgenstein, in the last proposition of the *Tractatus*) that "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." His passion for

[9] From the Ninth Elegy, Rilke's emphases. For the relationship between Rilke's "nur einmal" and Nietzsche's "eternal recurrence", see Erich Heller's *The Disinherited Mind* (1952), pp. 128–30.

[10] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (1915, tr. 1959), especially chapter iii.

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writing remains dominant to the end; it seems like the obverse of his fear of silence and insanity. It is at this point that the language of indirection and metaphors and the argument by "intimation and transference" come into their own.

THE EXISTENCE OF A NON-METAPHORICAL, perhaps numinous, world remains merely implied (implied in the word "metaphor"); and so does the relationship between it and the phenomenal world (the world represented by metaphors). But again the implication is not fortuitous.

Nietzsche's assertion of an "*eternal* justification of Being through the Aesthetic"—his later image of an "*eternal* recurrence of all things", as well as that lurid statement, also from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, that "God is dead" (a metaphor: for what? for the fact that God was once alive?) —are all examples of a metaphysics of which the least confusing thing to say is that it consistently avoids the dangers of dogma and petrifaction at the price of being consistently paradoxical. It reminds us of the central image of Rilke's *Duino Elegies*—the image of the angels who are "messengers" from nobody without a message of any particular kind, yet intimating "aesthetically" an order of some kind. Of that order which Nietzsche may have in mind we know no more than we know of "the Beautiful", of which the First Elegy proclaims that it is

> *. . . des Schrecklichen Anfang, den wir noch grade ertragen,/ und wir bewundern es so, weil es gelassen verschmäht,/ uns zu zerstören*
>
> . . . the beginning of Terror we are still just able to bear,/ and we adore it so because it serenely/ disdains to destroy us.

4. How are we to understand that "aesthetic attitude" from which language arises? If language is an army of metaphors, then the activity of artists—traditionally seen as makers of metaphors—and the aesthetic activity in general assume an entirely central position in the world, at the very heart of things. Art then, is neither esoteric and marginal, nor in any way dispensable, but becomes the human activity par excellence: it *is* creative existence. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche had used that strange sentence I have just mentioned, and repeated it three times:

> Only as an aesthetic phenomenon is the world and the being of man eternally justified.
>
> *Nur als aesthetisches Phänomen ist das Dasein und die Welt ewig gerechtfertigt.*

That assertion was in no way explained by its context and remained enigmatic; it is only the essay of the subsequent year which gives it a fuller meaning. The "justification" the world is said to achieve "as an aesthetic phenomenon"—*i.e.*, through "the aesthetic attitude"—is identical with the "justification" (or validation, or meaning) imprinted on the world through man the maker of linguistic conventions, that is, of a system of "metaphors." This, in turn, implies that gnosis on which Nietzsche's original idea of tragedy was founded and with which Nietzsche's present essay begins—the existence of a hostile universe of silence before and beyond language, within which the little human world of language is an oasis of life, of comfort and sustenance, but not of *truth*.

5. However, it is only when man ignores the "aesthetic" or metaphorical nature of his being in the world by taking it for granted, "when, [in his function] as an artistically creative subject, he forgets himself", that he is able to live at peace with himself and the world. Except for these precarious moments of harmony, achieved and experienced in the act of creation, the antagonism between the world and its aesthetic theodicy remains unreconciled. The artist is one who is and is not aware of the shifting grounds, the metaphorical and "lying" nature, of his productions. To him there applies that image from chapter 1 of *The Birth of Tragedy*, which again receives a fuller meaning through this later essay. What the artist and "the aesthetically sensitive man" experience is

> . . . the whole divine comedy of life, including the inferno . . . not like mere shadows on the wall—for he lives and suffers with these scenes—and yet not without that fleeting sensation of illusion. And perhaps many will, like myself, recall how amid the dangers and terrors of dreams they have occasionally called out to themselves in self-encouragement and not without success: "It is a dream! I wish to dream on!"
>
> *. . . die ganze "göttliche Komödie" des Lebens, mit dem Inferno [zieht an ihm vorbei] nicht nur wie ein Schattenspiel—denn er lebt und leidet mit in diesen Szenen—und doch auch nicht ohne jene flüchtige Empfindung des Scheins; und vielleicht erinnert sich mancher, gleich mir, in den Gefährlichkeiten und Schrecken des Traumes sich mitunter ermutigend und mit Erfolg zugerufen zu haben: "Es ist ein Traum! Ich will ihn weiterträumen!"*

The formulation is among the most accurate and beautiful in Nietzsche's work, yet it is as precarious as the moment it describes. The next step in the argument (in the second of *Thoughts out of Season*) will be the exaltation of a healthy, creative life at the cost of a "true" knowledge of the world, followed by Nietzsche's strange paeans to the unconscious, "the natural" and "the instinctive" as authentic modes of experience. We cannot blame Nietzsche for the ghastly company in which this enthusiasm for authenticity in its various forms will land him in our own time, when he can no longer "prevent [people] from doing mischief with me (*Verhüten*,

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dass man Unfug mit mir treibt)." Yet we must marvel at the paradox whereby this most intellectual and conscious of modern thinkers invokes values to which he is himself a stranger—a paradox for which we have lost all taste.

6. What are we to make of that strange, idiosyncratic insistence on the "lying" nature of language? Why does Nietzsche refuse to distinguish clearly between "fictions" and "lies"? Is he simply following Plato in the tenth book of the *Republic*? In the event, Nietzsche's concern is the opposite. Plato ignores the distinction because, by branding fiction as a lie, he hopes to safeguard the *polis* from the effects of poetic irresponsibility. (The myths of poets, Plato suggests, are hardly better than the evil lies of demagogues.) Nietzsche, on the other hand, cares little for the *polis*, and *seems* to care hardly more for truth, seeing that he delights in inventing situations in which life is shown to be possible only at the cost of sacrificing the pursuit of truth. Situations of this kind do not seem to worry him enough.

"Life", not the *polis* nor even "the world", is the real object of Nietzsche's concern. And life, he will argue, being the source and origin of rational distinctions, can never be defined and designated by them—and, again, this is a sophistry that does not worry him enough. Thus life, for Nietzsche, is never a concept but a vision, a metaphor which embraces all kinds of being but—and here I return to the point of my earlier criticism—is devalued when it is seen unheroically, under the aspect of association. Yet it is clear that the difference between myth or fiction or poetry, on the one hand, and the lie on the other derives its entire meaning from an organised legal or social context. Only to one who is prepared to take institutionalised life in the world seriously is this difference of any consequence. *Sub specie aeternitatis*, in terms of an aesthetic justification, it disappears.

AND HERE IS THE POINT at which we may look for an answer to the first of our three opening questions.

If (as we have seen) "life", as Nietzsche envisages it, can neither provide nor endure the unqualified truth about itself—if, furthermore, the most gifted of men are merely makers of metaphors, merely poets, and "poets lie too much"—and if, finally, all that happens in the world is enacted in unreality, on an "as if-" principle—then assuredly there is no good reason for taking life without its "aesthetic justification", life as it is, seriously.

The aesthetic attitude (and here we turn to our second question) is the human attitude *par excellence*. It justifies man's being in the world and gives order and shape to it; but this, again, is a pursuit which cannot be taken seriously. On the contrary: merriment and laughter ensue whenever we recognise what man's being amounts to—an immense, finely structured cosmic joke. The metaphysics of metaphor is a sample and paradigm of the metaphysics of being:

> Around the hero everything turns into tragedy, around the demi-god everything turns into satyric drama; and around God everything turns into—what? maybe the world?
>
> *Um den Helden herum wird alles zur Tragödie, um den Halbgott herum wird alles zum Satyrspiel; und um Gott herum wird alles—wie? vielleicht zur "Welt"?*

There is hardly a book of Nietzsche's which does not contain at least a sketch of such an aesthetic re-interpretation or an assurance that this is a vital part of his philosophical undertaking. And yet, to the end, this pan-aestheticism remains a mere speculative possibility, a mere intention. For however much Nietzsche aspires to it (and his admiration for the aesthetic attitude has occasionally an unpleasant undertone of self-conscious worldliness about it), however much he approvingly discerns it in certain "monumental" historical characters (reminding us occasionally of the *kitschig* "Renaissance men" of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer,[11] his contemporary), Nietzsche cannot forgo his moral-existential concern for long. It is as though he were haunted by a demon of that truth, the impossibility of which he has argued; as though he were compelled to insist not on the fiction but on *the lie* at the root of the metaphors which enable us to come to terms with the world into which we have been thrust; as though he were at the mercy of that "spirit of gravity" which is also a burden of weightiness[12] ("*Geist der Schwere*") and which he had so often ridiculed and renounced. For this emphasis on a moral terminology is certainly incompatible with the dream in which a central and all-embracing function is ascribed

[11] It is a curious coincidence—noted with approval by Martin Heidegger in his *Nietzsche* (1961)—that one of the most sensational of C. F. Meyer's tales, *Jürg Jenatsch* (1872/4) opens with a highly "Zarathustrian" description of the Oberengadin, where in August 1881 Nietzsche conceived the thought of "the Eternal Recurrence."

[12] The issue remains profoundly ambiguous. In *Zarathustra*, and in *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* and many other places, all signs of weightiness, heaviness, difficulty are disparaged, ridiculed, and are at their most ridiculous (as in Schopenhauer) attributed to the Germans: "Die Deutschen glauben sich tief, wenn sie sich schwer und trübsinning fühlen. . . ."

Yet in other contexts—e.g. "Ich will es so schwer haben, wie nur irgendein Mensch es hat . . ." (cited by Thomas Mann in his essay *Nietzsche's Philosophie im Lichte unserer Erfahrung* [1947])—the evaluation of "das Schwere" is entirely positive.

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to the aesthetic, seen as a game and a sport of the gods, a jolly and colourful army of metaphors. And this contradiction receives its final image in the anti-historical and "extra-moral" Nazarene figure of Jesus in Nietzsche's *Antichrist*—an image and a metaphor, but not a resolution. The contradiction remains unresolved, as far as I can see, to the end of Nietzsche's conscious life. He would indeed justify the whole world aesthetically, "were it not that I have bad dreams."

FINALLY, THE ESSAY with which I have been concerned, and in particular the idea of metaphor that is central to it, helps us to understand and appreciate the nature of Nietzsche's philosophical undertaking, his use of language generally as well as his unsettling mode of thinking.

7. Numerous critics of Nietzsche have read his work as that of a traditional 19th-century German conceptual philosopher or ideologist who, from irresponsibility, demagogy, or sheer ineptitude, made things unnecessarily difficult for himself and his readers by indulging in metaphor-mindedness. Critics of this sort see it as their task to demythologise Nietzsche's writings and, having freed them from their metaphors, to consider how much—or rather how little—remains valid in terms of a conceptually legitimised scheme or system. Other critics have taken the opposite view. They have seen him as a poet—either as a heroic poet of the German soul (in a tradition that goes from Hölderlin to Rilke, George, and Paul Celan), or as a pre-fascist poet-*manqué* with a penchant for *art nouveau* heraldic beasts (and, perhaps, a permanent place in Pseud's Corner). I believe he is none of these things, and that the alternative, poet *versus* philosopher, is misleading.

Assuming that the way a writer conceives of language and the way he describes it are also indicative of the way he uses it, we can see that what Nietzsche has evolved in those few years he was granted for his philosophical venture is a language and variety of styles which are metaphorical in something like the sense outlined in this early essay of his and the later observations that spring from it. It is a mode of writing somewhere between the individuation and concern with particulars which is the language area of fiction and poetry, and conceptual generalities and abstractions which make up the language area of traditional Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy.

As we have already seen: although the last (and weaker) section of the essay is concerned with the way in which "*Wissenschaftlichkeit*"—the language of science—is fashioned, and with the way in which it too is related to "the mobile army of metaphors", yet this language of science is not the language in which most of the essay itself is written. When Nietzsche refers to the image of the silver coin with its effaced inscription, its value reduced to that of the metal alone, he has in mind neither the coin itself (he is not telling a story) nor a generality which would make the precise image of the coin merely an illustration and therefore dispensable. The metaphor of the coin is intended as an intermediary between two modes of thinking and writing, as a pattern which determines neither a narrative line nor a piece of philosophical poetry or "*Begriffsdichtung*", but a philosophical argument.

THIS MIDDLE MODE OF DISCOURSE can certainly be *shown* (and to show it has been the purpose of this article); but I am not clear how it can be defined more precisely. It is not poetry—Nietzsche's poetry seems to me much less distinguished than his prose. Nor is it poetic prose—the poetic prose he wrote is in every sense (in itself, and in its influence) a disaster. Nor is it aphorism—Nietzsche's strictly aphoristic utterances are much less interesting than those of other practitioners of the genre, especially La Rochefoucauld and Lichtenberg, whom he admired. Then, again, there are the passages in which he is concerned with traditional conceptual problems (*e.g.* in his polemics against Kant), which are impatient, repetitious, and mostly perfunctory. What is truly distinguished in his work (and also, incidentally, the true ground of his immensely wide and often overpowering influence) is this middle mode of language—which, I suppose, we may call "literary-philosophical"—and to have devised this mode and applied it to an almost endless variety of contemporary issues is his greatest achievement.

The disdain with which Nietzsche treats the sphere of association and the consequent limitations of his view of life in the world have been mentioned; but there is another, positive, side to this story. The guiding intention of his philosophical prose is to convey not the general or the average but the unique, to preserve the dynamic, unsteady, the irregular, and above all the individualised nature of life. Schopenhauer once described his own philosophical style as the outcome of "my trick . . . of suddenly and instantly freezing the most living sense-experience or the deepest feeling the hour has brought with the coldest abstract reflection, in order to preserve it in a transfixed state. . . ." Nietzsche intends the opposite. His aim is to let the process of "Becoming" speak, to challenge "all those who swear by the gradualness of all development as by a moral law", to alienate "life" as little as

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possible from its uncertain, unstable, catastrophic origins, even at the price of intellectual coherence itself. Language, metaphor, and thought are related to "the real world" as patterns and paradigms of our being in its relationship to "the real world." There is no such thing as "Being at rest with itself, identical with itself, unaltering: the only 'Being' vouchsafed to us is changing, not identical with itself, it is involved in relationships."

Being involved in relationships: the ever-renewed attempts to preserve these "relationships" from petrifaction fill Nietzsche's books and notebooks; this is what he sees as the task of his philosophical *and* literary undertaking. It is not surprising that Nietzsche's hybrid mode of writing is forever in danger of being impatiently dismissed as "neither one thing nor t'other", for it constitutes a provocation of the genre theories and tacit assumptions on which French and English kinds of discourse are founded. But it has its antecedents (great writers are hardly ever formal innovators), in the early works of Plato, in Pascal, and a host of German as well as a few English writers (*e.g.* William Blake). And it has countless successors, among them the (equally irreducible) language of "family likenesses", "blurred photographs", and game metaphors in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations.*

AND HERE LIES THE ANSWER to our third opening question: in challenging, through this mode of writing, the absurd dichotomy of "scientific" *versus* "imaginative", or the antitheses between "concept" and "metaphor", between "abstract" and "concrete", Nietzsche is at the same time intent on challenging that division in our areas of knowledge-and-experience, that fragmentation of knowledge which he (together with men like Marx, Carlyle, and Matthew Arnold) saw as one of the chief blights of modern Western civilisation, as the sign of our decadence.

What Nietzsche teaches us is not to read philosophy as literature, let alone literature as philosophy, but to read both as closely connected forms of life.

The Rain

When my older brother
came back from the war
he had a little silver star on his forehead
and under the star
an abyss

a splinter of shrapnel
hit him at Verdun
or perhaps at Grünwald
(he didn't remember the details)

he talked a lot
in many languages
but most of all he liked
the language of history

until losing breath
he roused his dead comrades from the ground
Roland Jones Hannibal

he shouted
that this is the last crusade
that soon Carthage will fall
and then sobbing he confessed
that Napoleon doesn't like him

we watched
him become paler
his senses abandoned him
slowly he turned into a monument
into musical shells of ears
entered a stone forest

and the skin of his face
was fastened
with two blind dry
buttons of eyes

all he had left
was touch

what stories
he told with his hands
in the right he had romances
in the left soldier's memories

they took my brother
and carried him out of town

he returns now every autumn
thin and quiet
he doesn't want to enter the house
he knocks at the window for me to come out

we walk on the streets
and he tells me
unbelievable tales
touching the face
with blind fingers of weeping

Zbigniew Herbert
Translated by John and Bogdana Carpenter

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AMERICAN CHRONICLE

Bicentennial & After

Counterfeit & Genuine

By John R. Silber

IT WOULD HAVE been a travesty of the Bicentennial if we had only used it as an occasion for an orgy of self-congratulation or merely to further the tourist industry. The best way, it seems to me, for us to celebrate the historic signing of the Declaration of Independence is to renew our dedication to the proposition that all men are created equal and to our historic national goals of "the protection of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Americans must regain the clearsightedness and sense of purpose of the people of one Revolution. We must retain the distinctions our ancestors made between political appearances and political realities. "*To be, rather than to seem*"—the motto of North Carolina—is a crucial motto for this bicentenary and one that may enable us to distinguish democracy from its counterfeits.

JOHN R. SILBER *is the author of "The Ethical Significance of Kant's Religion" (1960). He is at present President of Boston University. His much-discussed critique of university reform and student rebellion, "Poisoning the Wells of Academe", appeared in the August 1974* ENCOUNTER.

TO GIVE GREATER MEANING and substance to the concept of equal opportunity has been a continuing concern of US government and of our American society over the last 200 years. Whatever be the shortfall in our attainment of these ideals, of their increasing realisation there can be no doubt.

But while we have been remarkably successful in extending opportunity through education, we have in the process debased the coinage of educational competence and removed from our educational programme the central core of moral instruction.

> "All value judgments are relative and of equal validity." "Anyone's opinion is as good as that of any other."

These are truisms of our educational programme. But they are counterfeits of the legitimate democratic principle that each person has a right to his own opinion, and they obliterate the difference between good and evil.

The difference between saying that anyone's opinion is as good as any other's and that everyone has a right to his own opinion is neither obscure nor difficult. Everyone has a right to his own opinion no matter how wrong, how ignorant, or even how stupid he may be; and he has the right to express that opinion. But it was never the intention of John Adams or Thomas Jefferson to suggest that the average citizen parade himself as a person equal in judgment, in discernment, or in knowledge to those competent to serve him in government. "That all men are born to equal rights is true", John Adams wrote—

> "Every being has a right to his own, as clear, as moral, as sacred as any other being has. . . . But to teach that all men are born with equal powers and faculties . . . is as gross a fraud, as glaring an imposition on the credulity of people as ever was practiced by monks, by Druids, [or] by Brahmins."

As Jefferson recognised, "There is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents." To which Jefferson contrasted "an artificial aristocracy, founded on wealth and birth, without either virtue or talents." A natural aristocracy, Jefferson believed, was

> "the most precious gift of nature. . . . May we not even say that that form of government is the best which provides most effectively for a pure selection of these natural *aristoi* into the offices of government?"

DEMOCRACY FREED FROM a counterfeit and ultimately destructive egalitarianism,[1] provides a society in which the wisest, the best,

[1] See Robert Nisbet, "The Fatal Ambivalence of an Idea: Equal Freemen or Equal Serfs", ENCOUNTER, December 1976.

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and the most dedicated assume positions of leadership. The members of a legislature, of a city council, or of a school board, ought to be chosen by democratic process and by no other way (we should be prepared to die in defence of this principle). But the persons elected to these offices ought to be better than average. They ought ideally to be the persons best qualified to hold office, to be better in their intellectual capacity and in their commitment to hard work. This does not mean that they should necessarily be men; college graduates; middle class; white; or members of any specific group. But since lawmakers really are the servants of the people, it follows that for the people nothing can be too good.

DEMOCRACY IS ALSO COUNTERFEITED by the claim that *every institution in a democracy ought to be democratic*. That the government must be democratic follows from the principle that it derives its authority from "the consent of the governed." This is the principle for which 200 years ago the first Americans mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour; we should be willing to do no less. But it does not follow that *every* institution within a democracy should be organised "democratically." In fact, most institutions ought to be run on an élitist basis—that is, decisions within them ought to be made by those most qualified to make them.

Élitism, like aristocracy, has its proper and mistaken forms. Élitism is mistaken only when it creates an élite whose qualifications are non-existent or irrelevant; and among the irrelevant qualifications still all too often imposed are those of sex and race. Whenever an unqualified man or woman is given a job merely because *he* is male or *she* is white, the principle being followed is not élitism, but its counterfeit. The élite thus created is artificial rather than natural. Rightly understood, there is nothing wrong with élitism; it is a principle essential to the quality of life.

Indeed, life itself may depend upon it. All would agree that the practise of surgery should be restricted to persons of extraordinary knowledge and skill. The term "butcher" is used to describe a surgeon who fails to meet this élitist standard. No one would give consent to be operated on by a surgeon who intended to poll those in the operating theatre before deciding on a procedure. We recognise that the surgeon's opinion should prevail without any plebiscite because it is better than the opinion of the nurse, the medical student, the interne, or the patient.

As long as intelligence is better than stupidity and knowledge than ignorance, no university can be run except on an élitist basis. A university that strives for the commonplace and is content with mediocrity would be roughly comparable to a Supreme Court on which seats were reserved for the dull-witted jurist. Thus handicapped, how could these institutions ever fulfil their missions in society?

IT WAS TO DEVELOP a natural aristocracy that the first Americans placed great emphasis on education. Writing in 1717, John Wise (minister of Ipswich, Massachusetts) quoted Plutarch:

> "Those persons who live in obedience to reason are worthy to be accounted free: they alone live as they will, who have learned what they ought to will."

The writings of Madison, Jefferson, and Adams abound in detailed expositions of this principle. They insisted that the value of education could not be exaggerated because it is the condition on which effective self-government, whether of the state or of the individual, depends.

> "If a nation [Jefferson wrote] expects to be ignorant and free . . . it expects what never was and never will be."

Adams wrote:

> "Laws for the liberal education of youth, especially of the lower class of people, are so extremely wise and useful that to a humane and generous mind no expense for this purpose would be thought extravagant."

So great was the concern of Adams and Jefferson for education that the former wrote a provision for it into the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the latter drafted and commented on a law to establish education in Virginia.

The education they had in mind was a liberal education, rich not merely in the study of the sciences but also in the study of morals. Adams said:

> "It shall be the duty of legislators and magistrates in all future periods of this Commonwealth to cherish the interests of literature and sciences, and to establish institutions that would countenance and inculcate the principles of humanity and general benevolence, public and private charity, industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality in their dealings, sincerity, good humor, and all social affections and generous sentiments among the people."

These concerns were advanced by Horace Mann, who in 1842 explained what American schools should have been and should yet become.

> "In them, the principles of morality should have been . . . intermingled with the principles of science. . . . The multiplication tables should not have been more familiar, nor more frequently applied, than the rule, to do to others as we would that they should do unto us. The lives of great and good men should have been held up for admiration and example. . . ."

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Horace Mann prescribed a system of education for the whole child that would lead to his personal, economic, and social fulfilment.

Education that is not excellent is a counterfeit, and constitutes a betrayal of a truly democratic society whose existence depends on meaningful education. A democratic society cannot function effectively unless the curricula of primary and secondary schools, and colleges and universities, are designed to prepare citizens for the tasks that lie before them. But it is idle to speak of values and the inculcation of values as if the term "*value*" in isolation had any significance.

A pornographic bookstore exhibits and encourages values. The problem is: *what values* should we inculcate? We should be concerned not to inculcate "values" in general; rather, we should encourage knowledge of and respect for truth, courage, sincerity, justice, wisdom. We must, for example, establish in the consciousness of our children the hard-fought-for distinction between right and power—and the rational basis for *preferring right to power*. Although it is rarely articulated, the rational derivation of that distinction is quite as objective as any scientific demonstration. It is a part of our historical legacy, though often forgotten.

A MORE RECENTLY MINTED COUNTERFEIT claims that the individual must define himself not as an American but in terms of his ethnic group, with a consequent rejection of the historical ideal of the melting pot—embodied in the US national motto, "*E Pluribus Unum*", one out of many—and its replacement by an exaggerated ethnicity. We see this in the current assumption—embodied in attempts to require bilingual ballots—that a citizen need not be literate in the national language so long as he is literate in the language of his ethnic group. I do not mean to decry worthy bilingual programmes necessary to the provision of equal educational opportunity. Such programmes are essential to the realisation of fundamental democratic rights for precisely this reason: citizens must speak their national language if they are to participate fully in the rights of citizenship.

When we emphasise ethnicity[2] to the extent of substituting it for the national culture, we mistake utterly its relation to American citizenship. The culture of the United States is an amalgam of cultures brought to it from abroad: one out of many. This explains its extraordinary diversity and strength. But it has been one culture. Never before in the history of man has one culture been shared in and contributed to by so many people stemming from such diverse origins and living over so vast a territory.[3] It is remarkable that a nation of such ethnic diversity has not been torn apart by intercommunal violence. This is the blessing conferred by the "Melting Pot", and we would be foolish to exchange it for the anarchy of the Tower of Babel.

But we do not have to choose between the Melting Pot on the one hand or the Tower of Babel on the other. Might not a more useful metaphor be the symphony orchestra, or indeed the Dixieland band. For surely our basic concern should be to insure an essential harmony amid the multiplicity of notes and timbres.

The right to pursue happiness as one sees fit certainly allows groups and individuals a full range of ethnicity in their lives. But this does not mean that government should constantly accommodate to this choice. In a country of this diversity, such an accommodation would be tremendously expensive and ultimately destructive of national unity.

A PARTICULARLY IGNOBLE COUNTERFEIT is the substitution of the goal of equal achievement for that of equal opportunity. This nation and its citizens can never fulfil their destinies, if achievement is cut down to the lowest common denominator.

Liberty must include the freedom to excel for all of those who have the energy, the motivation, and the capacity to do so. Abilities—artistic, motivational, intellectual—are unearned talents received by the individual to be used by him for his own development and for the development of that society on which he is always dependent. We must not allow those who start out life with extraordinary advantages of wealth or position to erect barricades denying "upward mobility" to others or guard-rails protecting themselves from "downward mobility."

When middle-class white students began demanding to take courses on the *pass/fail* basis, they had discovered an ingenious means of protecting themselves from downward mobility and of denying social and economic advancement to the ambitious new classes of blacks, disadvantaged whites, and other minorities whose determination to join the middle class poses a palpable threat to those middle-class whites who lack either the energy or the ability for the invigorating life of freedom. It is this life of freedom that is the genuine coin debased by the doctrine of "equal achievement."

THE COUNTERFEITING of democracy under an egalitarianism that decries competence,

[2] On this subject generally, see Nathan Glazer, "The Universalisation of Ethnicity", ENCOUNTER, February 1975.

[3] See H. C. Allen, "The Anglo-American Gene Pool", ENCOUNTER, December 1976.

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achievement, and excellence, and that undermines all moral education by the assertion of a dogmatic relativism moves hand in hand with a much more serious confusion. Increasingly, we confuse "the pursuit of happiness", guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence, with the pursuit of pleasure. The distinction between the two is fundamental and it must be retained; since it is largely lost, it must be recovered. In the midst of prosperity (more accurately described as *luxury*) on a scale unprecedented in the history of mankind, we have come to believe that the pursuit of happiness is reducible to the pursuit of pleasure.

Concurrently, we have mindlessly pursued immediate gratification, willingly forfeiting health, human dignity, and national security.

OUR AGE has developed the ultimate defence of pleasure as a guide to the moral life. Four years ago, a young Californian explained to an audience how she knew that certain of her actions had been right. "*I knew it was right*", she said, "*because it felt good when I was doing it.*" She was not explaining her justification for taking some new drug or for performing a new sexual act. Her name was Susan Atkins, a member of the "Manson Family", and she was describing her horrible justification for the savage murder of seven people. The criterion of pleasure does not differentiate between higher and lower pleasures or between good and bad pleasures. Once it is agreed that the criterion is pleasure, pleasure becomes its own justification.

This is the extreme pathology of the pursuit of pleasure. For the past 25 years the Television industry and its advertisers have promoted the pursuit of pleasure, in less extreme forms, as a substitute for the pursuit of happiness counterfeited by it. In this they have been enormously successful; and it is doubtful that many of those in attendance at the Continental Congress would have voted for the phrase "the pursuit of happiness" had they known their descendants would debase it.

The promulgation of this counterfeit has resulted not so much from the abdication of moral instruction in our schools as from the usurpation of moral instruction by cynical television advertisers who pass this counterfeit as often in commercials as in programmes. Television advertising has a philosophical, sometimes even theological content. Schlitz, a beer firm with a licence to brew but none to preach, intones, "You only go around once in life; therefore, get all the gusto you can!" These are not statements about beer, but a theological claim and moral injunction for which no justification has been made. The current moral injunction from Schlitz is one that Susan Atkins would probably applaud: "*When it's right, you know it!*" Thus the child watching Schlitz advertising learns that ethical decisions—among the most difficult and important that he will ever make—are a simple matter of intuition, no more difficult than the assessment of one's delight while drinking a can of beer.

Dedicated to the pursuit of pleasure rather than happiness, Television has reduced the pursuit of nutrition to the pursuit of sweetness. Wholesome cereals with high nutritional content, *e.g.* oatmeal, are increasingly replaced by trashy concoctions designed to please rather than to nourish the younger generation. The distinguished nutritionist, President Jean Mayer of Tufts University, has said that popular cereals have a sugar content of as much as 50% and that many have less protein than a candy bar. By constant reiteration of the idea that the sweeter the breakfast cereal, the better it is, Television has educated a generation in self-destructive eating habits. Television has successfully instilled the idea that the first meal of the day should be dessert.

BUT THE PERVERSE THEOLOGISING is not limited to the advertising breaks. The presence on Television of a lovable, racist bigot like Archie Bunker—based on the BBC's Alf Garnett—is frequently applauded on the grounds that it does the country good to see itself as it is—even to the point of indecent exposure. The only virtue that can be tolerated in a pleasure-seeking culture is the instant virtue, "sincerity"—a virtue that requires no preparation and imposes no restrictions. Sincerity is naturally the most popular virtue, because anyone can be sincere on any particular issue without any inconvenience at any given moment. Forgetting that Adolf Hitler was consummately sincere, we are encouraged to believe that because Archie Bunker is sincere, he is also morally dignified. We are asked to regard as morally indifferent the massive ignorance on which his sincerity depends. We are asked to believe that this nation will be a better nation if, following Archie's example, instead of suppressing its vices, it sincerely avows them. In sordid truth, Archie gives us pleasure by indulging gloriously in our vices, and we indulge vicariously through him, with no feeling of guilt. Without responsibility or guilt, we achieve no-fault participation. Rochefoucauld was correct, however, to insist that hypocrisy is the tribute that vice pays virtue; but Rochefoucauld is a bit dated for our time. We are so accustomed to base usage, that in describing us he would have to say that hypocrisy is the deserved tribute that vice ought to pay virtue but rarely does.

It would be far better for us to attempt, with

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whatever degree of hypocrisy, to live a virtuous life that is not fully habitual, in the hope that it will become habitual and finally an essential part of ourselves, than to express ourselves in fun-loving, pleasure-giving racism, violence, and over-indulgence. Shakespeare was well aware of this principle, for Hamlet tells his errant mother, "Assume the virtue, if you have it not. . . . For use almost can change the stamp of nature."

THROUGH TELEVISION WE HAVE PREPARED ourselves and our children for disaster. We have advocated a system of hedonism, of immediate gratification; and we have achieved a national state of insatiability at the very time when natural resources and energy will not sustain our luxurious appetites, and at a time when Television has informed us of merciless want in the rest of the world and in parts of our own country. Only with thoughtful restraint and prudent management, without which neither pleasure nor happiness is possible, can these explosive tensions be contained.

The counterfeits of democracy detract from our sense of national purpose and weaken our nation as they weaken each individual within it. Our democracy does not need the competition of so many counterfeits. It may well be subject to Gresham's Law: the counterfeit may expel the genuine. Counterfeited democracy is destructive, for it weakens the ability of the people to rule themselves wisely; and in the absence of wise government, it weakens those bonds of affection and patriotism on which national survival depends.

I HAVE SPOKEN THUS FAR of factors internal to our national survival. But we must not overlook the external threats to democracy. In 1949, with sanguine hope, President Truman predicted increasing international security and growing prosperity:

> "As more and more nations come to know the benefits of democracy and to participate in growing abundance, I believe those countries which now oppose us will abandon their delusions and join with the free nations of the world in a just settlement of international differences."

This reasonable expectation has, unfortunately, been shattered by the conflicting purposes and vaulting ambitions of nations that we sustained through the Second World War.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, deeply appreciative of the "shining strongholds of Western freedom", has felt compelled to note the continuing encroachment of totalitarianism in the West. And he has identified, correctly, I believe, the cause of this trend in the democracies themselves:

> "If the region of free social systems in the world keeps shrinking and if huge continents only recently obtaining freedom are being drawn off into the zone of tyranny, then the fault lies not just with totalitarianism—which devours freedom as a function of its natural growth—but, obviously, also with the free systems themselves which have lost something of their inner strength and stability."

Acutely aware of the dangers, Solzhenitsyn does not despair of our capacity to face them with the strength and purpose that animated the delegates to the Continental Congress. "I believe profoundly", he has said:

> "in the soundness, the healthiness of the roots, of the great-spirited powerful American nation—with the insistent honesty of its youth, and its alert moral sense. With my own eyes I have seen the American country, and precisely because of that I have spoken today with steadfast hope."

Our ability to preserve our freedom in the face of devouring totalitarianism depends not so much on our material strengths as on our moral determination. If, confusing pleasure with happiness, we say (in the old Bertrand Russell slogan) "Better Red than dead", we must face the withering reply from Solzhenitsyn:

> "In this horrible expression of Bertrand Russell, there is an absence of all moral criteria. Looked at from a short distance, these words allow one to maneuvre and to continue to enjoy life; but from a long-term view, it will undoubtedly destroy those people who think like that."

We may continue to pursue détente as a matter of national policy, but it will be a policy of national suicide unless we use all our skills as Yankee traders and demand a concession in return for every concession. Solzhenitsyn has perceptively insisted:

> "Détente is necessary, but détente with open hands. Show that there is no stone in your hands. But your partners with whom you are conducting détente have a stone in theirs, and it is so heavy that it could kill you with one single blow. Détente becomes self-deception."

ARE WE IMPRESSED BY the spirit of Helsinki? Solzhenitsyn asks why, and gives the answer himself:

> "The journalists have bowed to the spirit of Helsinki. I know for a fact that Western journalists in Moscow who have been given the right of freer movement in return for this and because of the spirit of Helsinki, no longer accept information about new persecutions of dissidents in the Soviet Union. What does the spirit of Helsinki and the spirit of détente mean for us within the Soviet Union? The strengthening of totalitarianism."

The spirit of Helsinki has been consistently violated by the Soviet Union in its refusal to allow emigration and in its direct involvement, and in its support of Cuba's military involvement

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in Angola. We think détente is a respite, but Solzhenitsyn replies with fearful cogency:

> "This is an imaginary respite; it is a respite before destruction. . . . You recall the tension of the Fifties, but despite that tension you conceded nothing. But today you don't have to be a strategist to understand why Angola is being taken. What for? This is . . . a wonderful position in the Atlantic. . . . Now it is the Soviet Union that has the navy, control of the seas, bases. You may call this détente if you like but after Angola I just can't understand how one's tongue can utter this word."

How indeed? The counterfeit of détente as now practised is evident in the refusal of the Soviet Union to assure Western diplomats the personal security that civilised nations have for centuries extended to ambassadors. During the Hundred Years' War, the English King's herald could ride through hostile France from Calais to Paris in inviolate safety. But our diplomatic staff in Moscow, working in a building that is United States territory, are bombarded with dangerous levels of microwave radiation; and we do nothing about it. Surely the Soviet Union should be told that diplomatic relations presuppose the inviolability of embassies, and that if the bombardment does not cease, our ambassador will be recalled. It is unthinkable that our forbears would have accepted this humiliating and dangerous assault on American citizens; and it is chilling to imagine what the Soviets must think of a government that supinely accepts such treatment.

ON THE 200th ANNIVERSARY of the birth of our Republic America faced dangers at home and abroad. We may feel oppressed by the magnitude of our problems, but let us take pride in the fact that Solzhenitsyn and men and women the world over still look to America as the "last best hope" for freedom in the world.

Despite our weakness, we are very strong; and despite our uncertainty, we are capable of great resolve. Whatever our faults, we have also our virtues; and the former do not eclipse the latter.

Today America's gravest internal problem is the problem of race. But in Jefferson's day it was the odium of slavery itself. Reflecting on that cruel estate, both he and Adams despaired of the nation's future; and Jefferson feared for his country when he remembered that God is just. As a nation we took our first steps toward atoning for the crime of slavery in a bloody civil war by which slaves were emancipated and the union preserved. And in the 200th year of our independence, after remarkable progress in achieving the ideals and goals of our revolution, there is no excuse for further delay in removing the last vestiges of slavery.

We stand between a past, glorious and unequalled in human history for the fulfilment of freedom, and a future, dark and uncertain, perhaps as frightening as that faced two centuries ago by the members of the Continental Congress. As they debated colonial independence it became clear that the British government had decided to retain its American Colonies even at the cost of making war on them. Informed that General Howe had begun concentrating his forces for the invasion of the city of New York, the delegates nevertheless adopted the Declaration of Independence.

"Think of our ancestors and of our posterity!" This was John Quincy Adams's perceptive injunction in his inaugural address. On the Bicentennial occasion Americans expressed their gratitude to earlier generations for a national legacy that each succeeding generation has made its own. And there was also a pledge to our posterity that we shall do our part in passing on the Republic whole and worthy. Our forbears, like ourselves, were bound to this country by a patriotism that was both instinctive and reflective—instinctive as a feeling that connects one with one's birthplace, a fondness for customs and traditions, loving one's country as one loves one's home—and reflective, as grounded in a devotion to self-government, sound laws, and the opportunity to flourish in an atmosphere of freedom. Our patriotism, at once rational and hereditary, ties us to the land where our fathers died, the land of pilgrims' pride, the land where freedom rings.

As Samuel Adams told his fellow 18th-century Americans:

> "The liberties of our country, the freedoms of our civil constitution, are worth defending at all hazards; and it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors: they purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood, and transmitted them to us with care and diligence. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle, or be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men. . . . Our contest is not only whether we ourselves shall be free, but whether there shall be left to mankind an asylum for civil and religious liberty."

Samuel Adams's contemporaries took him seriously and had the courage to act on his advice; they gave birth to a new nation and sustained it. If we would earn our heritage, we must do the same.

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R. S. Thomas

The Lecture

During a pause
in the lecture there are heard singing
those other birds of the imagination
too often silent. The class
is obviously listening; the speaker
is nettled. "I would remind
you, gentlemen, that Keats
embroidered; the nightingale is a bird
of few notes, if loud. It is the male
sings, its heart punctured
by no thorn, nor by the memory
of having been served up in a dish
for supper. Lebensraum
is its need; which brings me back
to what I was saying. Nations
are claustrophobic; they are the small yawns
of history, the indigestion an empire
must suffer for doing mankind the service
of swallowing them. Take Ireland. . . . "
"A fishbone
in Her Majesty's throat!"
Lecturer and students
are silent. They stare at the wall
as though a hand had appeared and was busy re-writing
the words. Through closed windows,
down pouring gangways of white
light from invisible aircraft the advocates
of the future enter. They are here to plead
for the fact with the poet and historian.

The Possession

He is a religious man.
How often I have heard him say,
looking around with his worried eyes
at the emptiness: There must be something.

It is the same at night, when,
rising from his fused prayers,
he faces the illuminated city
above him. All that brightness, he thinks,

and nobody there? I am nothing
religious. All I have is a piece
of the universal mind that reflects
infinite darkness between points of light.

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Fleur Adcock

Mr Morrison

Goslings dive in the lake,
leaves dazzle on the trees;
on the warm grass two ducks are parked neatly
together like a pair of shoes.

A coot plays beaks with its chick;
children laugh and exclaim.
Mr Morrison saunters past, smiling at them,
humming a Sunday-school hymn.

He wonders about his mood,
irredeemably content:
he should worry more about poverty, oppression,
injustice; but he can't, he can't.

He is not too callous to care
but is satisfied in his work,
well-fed, well-housed, tolerably married,
and enjoying a walk in the park.

Then the sun sticks in the sky,
the tune sticks in his throat,
a burning hand with razors for fingernails
reaches inside his coat

and hotly claws at his heart.
He stands very quiet and still,
seeing if he dares to breathe just a fraction;
sweating; afraid he'll fall.

With stiff little wooden steps
he edges his way to a bench
and lowers his body with its secret fiery
tenant down, inch by inch.

He orders himself to be calm:
no doubt it will soon pass.
He resolves to smoke less, watch his cholesterol,
walk more, use the car less.

And it passes: he is released,
the stabbing fingers depart.
Tentatively at first, then easily,
he fills his lungs without hurt.

He is safe; and he is absolved:
it was not just pain, after all;
it enrolled him among the sufferers, allotted him
a stake in the world's ill.

Doors open inside his head;
once again, he begins to hum:
he's been granted one small occasion for worry
and the promise of more to come.

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NOTES & TOPICS

François Bondy

European Notebook

Europe's Mezzogiorno

Brussels

FOR YEARS NOW three dictatorial régimes in non-Communist Europe presented European democrats with an embarrassing problem. Reference to the East European dictatorships, imposed or supported by the Soviet Union, were countered by reference to "Portugal", "Spain", "Greece", whose rulers were on the best of terms with their common protector the United States as well as with some West European democracies. They belonged in different ways (two of them directly), to the Euro-American defence community known as NATO, of which two of them formed an integral part. Thus the neat contrast between Western freedom and Eastern oppression, true in general but not in detail, was spoilt by a *Realpolitik* that bore the amoral marks of cynicism.

The years have brought a piece of luck for the European idea. Two of those dictatorships have been overthrown while the third, in Spain, is giving way to democracy. In Portugal an abrupt extremist change from one kind of dictatorship to another—based on an ideological military cadre and a minority Marxist party—was prevented. In this case West European democrats strongly committed themselves.

But the European democracies can claim no credit for the collapse of the compromising dictatorial régimes, and the Americans have even less right to do so (except, possibly, in the case of Greece, because of the naivety with which they supported rather than prevented a suicidal adventure by the *Junta*). But it must be emphasised that leading economic circles as well as the people of those three countries looked increasingly towards the European Community. The realisation that dictatorships could not become "members of the European club" played an important part in the erosion of those régimes.

These three strokes of luck for Europe have, however, presented the Brussels Commissioners and the Community governments with a whole complex of problems which they would much prefer to be without. By its expansion northwards the relatively close-knit community of the Six assumed tremendous burdens—Continental taxpayers are now financing a quarter of British food imports—and South Europe holds out a prospect of competition that is alarming to Italian and French farmers. Also Turkey, with a population increase of a million a year, is knocking at the door, and claiming unrestricted entry for all its jobless seeking work in all the community countries—a prospect deeply alarming to the West Germans.

Eurocrats and politicians are wondering here how much the Community can expand without bursting. How many nations with different economic structures and a much lower standard of living can it "integrate" without disintegrating? Just how much *Mezzogiorno* can it absorb? The Greeks, the Portuguese, and the Spaniards now point out that they need the "European model", the "solidarity" of the European democracies, if they are to survive in freedom. Were they not continually urged to liberalise and democratise themselves? They are now doing so. Should not the bargain be honoured?

I am afraid it will be more and more necessary to make a fine distinction between European "solidarity" and European "integration." The first thing that this presupposes is a measure of unhabitual political imagination and some new initiatives on the part of the "Europeans." Is that too much to ask for, too much to hope? One can only ask, sceptically, worriedly, here in Brussels.

"I Love You!"

Washington D.C.

I AM REMINDED HERE of the Goethean question: "*Wie haelst Du's mit der Religion*? (Where do you stand in regard to religion?)." That question, put to Goethe's Faust, became proverbial. But no American Gretchen would ever have had to put it to a candidate for the US Presidency. On this last electoral occasion all of us, voters and onlookers alike, were far better informed on this theological matter than we were on the candidate's political plans. Jerry Ford is a conservative Episcopalian.

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He adopted radical evangelism, and he has a son at a theological college. As for President-elect Jimmy Carter—his irresistible advance forced us to become experts on the Baptists, The Revivalists, The Faith-Healers, *et al.* in The Old Bible Belt of The Deep South.

True, the present strong "revivalist movement" is the third or fourth such wave in recent American history. US historians have recently been studying the relevance of "politics of faith", of millenarianism and messianism, from the Founding Fathers to Woodrow Wilson. In spite of Dr Reinhold Niebuhr (whom Carter quotes in his book *Why Not The Best?*), articulate theology plays a much smaller part in American Protestantism than it does in Europe. For many years past "revivalist" preachers (from Dwight Moody to Billy Sunday to Billy Graham) have been among the most famous and successful Americans.

Behind Jimmy Carter's certainty of direct contact with the Almighty—he calls his prayers "talking to God", and feels that no monologue but a beneficent partnership is involved—there is a tradition which goes back more than three centuries.

BUT WHY IS RELIGION in America so much more strongly linked with "hot gospellers", with "speaking with tongues" and the sense of "rebirth" than it is elsewhere in the Western world? Is it more "Christian"? A hundred and forty years ago the nation's most celebrated interpreter, Alexis de Tocqueville, gave a great deal of space to religion in his book on *Democracy in America*. He regarded it as a necessity, and indeed an advantage. He also wrote: "Here and there strange sects arise that seek to open unusual paths to eternal bliss." And why? "If circumstances of social status did not tie the American spirit so closely to the search for prosperity, that spirit would show more reserve, experience and moderation when it concerned itself with non-material things." In other words: materialism calls for mysticism. The two belong together.

Revivalist religion seems to radiate a sustained and inexhaustible love. "Rosalyn and I love you" were Carter's opening words at an election meeting in a small southern town. Is there a relationship between the religion of Revivalism and Love and such problematical movements as the sect of Moon or Hare Krishna? In one respect there is. What matters is less the content of a faith than a mood, a "good feeling", a sense of power and security. It is "faith in faith", because faith—any faith—moves mountains.

What do America's enlightened, critical intellectuals say to this? They are far from mocking the "revivalists" as Paris anti-clericals, for instance, ridicule French priests. They are not faced with the difficulties of ancient institutions and traditional compulsions, for here everything comes "spontaneously" from the People itself.

But can one, in the last analysis, quite overlook that one faith is not exactly equivalent to another? America's leading politicians used to be Puritans with a troubled sense of sin; and their Christianity was considered to be a "repressive inhibition." Now, I am told here, they are complex-free men who have been "reborn" and their Christianity is a happy self-confirmation.

Well, Goethe did once believe that "*Amerika, du hast es besser*", so one shouldn't wonder about the possible bewilderment of his Gretchen to the varieties of religious experience.

Kiss of Death

Paris

UNDER THE fifth republic, becoming a member of the Government automatically involves losing one's parliamentary seat. It is taken over by the "deputy" (or substitute) who is elected with every deputy. On resignation or dismissal from the Government one calls on one's substitute to withdraw and submits oneself for re-election. Thus the switch from a Chirac to a Barre Government forced seven under-secretaries of state to go to the hustings and find out whether they still enjoyed support.

Six of the seven survived the test. In the case of the seventh the substitute had made himself so popular that the constituency refused to let him go. For governing majorities to suffer such setbacks in mid-term by-elections is normal; it happens to Socialists as it does to Conservatives. So why were these elections, which affected fewer than one per cent of the electorate (and in which the vote was far less than it is in a general election) felt to be a slap in the face for the President and leader of the majority?

Giscard d'Estaing's majority consists of two elements (1) the Gaullist *bloc*, which the dismissed Prime Minister Jacques Chirac (in the old Gaullist tradition) wants to turn back into a *rassemblement*—its forces gathered in Paris in December. And (2) right wing, centre and left-

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wing non-Gaullists out of whom the President and his Minister of the Interior Poniatowski would very much like to make a "counter-force." But, like many a Central American republic, these groups have more generals than soldiers, and an abundance of claims to leadership is not accompanied by any willingness to be led. That's the main trouble with the second *rassemblement*.

In these by-elections there were three highly topical and explosive questions. Let me enumerate them:

1. How was the national majority faring in relation to the opposition of the Socialists, left-wing Radicals, and Communists? The answer is: not very well. The Socialists increased their votes everywhere and gained one seat; in spite of many predictions, discipline between Socialist and Communist voters was rather well maintained.
2. How was Giscard's majority of reformers faring in relation to the Gaullists? Answer: badly. The only candidates who got through on the first ballot were the two Gaullists (including Chirac himself). When they entered the Chamber they were received with ovations, in which the Giscardists half-heartedly joined.
3. How was Giscard's own party, the Independent Republicans, faring in the non-Gaullist group? The answer is: disastrously. A member of that party who scraped home by a few hundred votes said after the first ballot: "What harmed me was my image as a friend of the President." The other Independent Republican was defeated. Once upon a time during the triumphal era of de Gaulle, the President's name was enough to ensure victory on the first ballot to hundreds of candidates who were often unknown in their constituencies. They flew into the Palais Bourbon on his coat-tails. President Giscard d'Estaing has no coat-tails. His friendship is what in American gangster films is called "the kiss of death." Is the new year beginning with the "twilight of Giscard"? I am afraid that his majority is "unionising" itself apart. In view of its small popular margin it means that most of the disputants involved, incapable of "hanging together", will probably be hanging separately.

Concerning Agnes

By Desmond Hawkins

IN DECEMBER 1926 Thomas Hardy received the news that one more of his old friends had died. Florence Hardy dutifully wrote a note of condolence on their behalf, and the son of the deceased woman sent to Max Gate a touching reply which Florence preserved. "She was the centre of our world and without her we seem utterly lost." Presumably Florence showed the letter to Hardy, and the old man—he was then eighty-six—pondered on the event. Soon afterwards he took up his pen and headed a sheet of paper with the two words "Concerning Agnes." What followed was the tender and moving elegy that opens with the lines—

I am stopped from hoping what I have hoped before—
Yes, many a time!—
To dance with that fair woman yet once more
As in the prime
Of August, when the wide-faced moon looked through
The boughs at the faery lamps of the Larmer Avenue.

The poem appeared two years later in *Winter Words*, a few months after Hardy himself had died. The identity of Agnes was not revealed but—as in other poems about the "fair women" who stirred his romantic impulse—the poet incorporated an unmistakable clue. The only time Hardy danced under "the faery lamps of the Larmer Avenue" was in September 1895 when he and his first wife, Emma, spent a few days at Rushmore as the guests of General Pitt-Rivers. The General had inherited the Rivers estates in 1880, an unexpected stroke of fortune which led him to change his name from Lane-Fox to Pitt-Rivers and which gave him the opportunity to undertake the pioneer work in archaeology on which his fame rests. He had other outlets, however, for his wealth and imaginative energy, and one of them was the Pleasure Gardens that he created at an ancient local landmark, the Larmer Tree. Here he assembled buildings from the Indian Exhibition at Earl's Court, an open air theatre and other buildings and follies of his own design in the *ferme ornée* tradition, grouped in a spacious garden. It was a great centre of attraction in the '90s, particularly for visitors to the rapidly growing resort of Bournemouth, less than twenty miles away.

The invitation to the Hardys to visit Rushmore in September was clearly timed to synchronise with the great annual event at the Larmer Tree Gardens—a day devoted to sports, horse racing, a concert and general festivities which culminated in dancing on the grass by the light of thousands of Vauxhall lamps. Hardy must have been

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pleased and impressed by the occasion for he preserved a newspaper cutting describing the scene. Twenty years later, when he was preparing his autobiography, he quoted extensively from this account in what he called "the local paper"; it was in fact the *Dorset County Chronicle* and its description included a reference to some country dances "started by the house-party, and led off by the beautiful Mrs Grove, the daughter of General Pitt-Rivers."

To the words of the local journalist Hardy added his own comments in *The Life of Thomas Hardy*, emphasising that "It was he who started the country dances, his partner being the above-mentioned Mrs (afterwards Lady) Grove." In a later reference Hardy refers to her similarly as "the beautiful Mrs, afterwards Lady, Grove." She was the Agnes whose death thirty years later inspired in him the wish to have over again

That old romance,
And sit apart in the shade as we sat then
After the dance
The while I held her hand.

Just what was she like, this beautiful daughter of the General who made such an instant impact on Thomas Hardy? She started life in 1863 as Agnes Geraldine Lane-Fox; when her father took the name of Pitt-Rivers he had his children renamed as Fox-Pitt, so it was as Agnes Geraldine Fox-Pitt that she married Walter Grove. The Groves were a distinguished local family of ancient pedigree occupying Ferne, a big estate neighbouring Rushmore. Walter's father, whom he succeeded in the baronetcy in 1897, was Sir Thomas Grove, M.P. By 1895 Walter Grove and Agnes were living at nearby Berwick St John and were the parents of three children.

Their marriage had not been accomplished without obstacles and last-minute alarms. Sir Thomas Grove, financially uneasy and himself contemplating a second marriage, fought a stout rearguard action against the marriage-settlement on which General Pitt-Rivers was insisting in the interests of his daughter. At one point Agnes considered herself to be virtually a prisoner, with Walter forbidden to visit her and reduced to sending letters to her sister or by other intermediaries. The wedding was only eight days away and on the verge of cancellation when a late change of heart saved it. During the uncertainties of the previous weeks the emotional vehemence of life in the General's household found a correspondingly passionate expression in Agnes's diary.

Her mother was one of the Stanleys of Alderley—Bertrand Russell was therefore a cousin—and the fusion of the well-known Stanley characteristics with the Pitt-Rivers qualities could hardly fail to produce a vivid, imperious, sharp-tongued personality. Like her two sisters Agnes decided early to have the independence of her own establishment as a married woman: she was nineteen when she escaped from what she regarded as the tyranny of "the Man" and "the minor one", as she referred to her parents in the more turbulent periods of her home life. In Walter Grove she found a kindly, unambitious, admiring partner who was content to remain in the background while she blossomed socially as a beauty whose quickness of mind and love of debate made her an exciting companion. She must have been at the height of her splendour in the 1890s—reminding Hardy perhaps of that other *femme de trente ans*, Viviette Lady Constantine in *Two on a Tower*.

THE LARMER TREE DANCE took place on Wednesday the fourth of September 1895. The Hardys arrived at Rushmore the previous day; and on the Thursday morning following the dance Agnes caught a morning train to London with her husband, on their way to Paris and Geneva. Hardy therefore met her for the first and only time during the week, when the house party mustered for the Larmer Tree festivities. Her diary confirms this, the entry for 4 September reading "Went to Larmer Tree sports. Met and talked to Thomas Hardy, found him interesting. Dined there." She made no reference to their dancing.

Hardy's immediate reaction was more eloquent. On his return to Max Gate he wrote to Florence Henniker, describing the Rushmore visit as "the most romantic time I have had since I visited you in Dublin." In all the circumstances those were large words. The visit to Dublin in the spring of 1893, when Mrs Henniker was acting as hostess at the Vice-regal Lodge for her brother, Lord Houghton, had initiated a romantic relationship which—on Hardy's side at least—was deeply felt. By the autumn of 1895 the fulness of his emotion was ebbing as he recognised the widening gap between Mrs Henniker's fundamental attitudes to life and his own.

When *Jude the Obscure* was published Hardy admitted a hesitation before sending Mrs Henniker a copy. Although he denied that this was because he thought her outlook narrow he later commented, "I don't suppose you will care to read a word in favour of poor *Jude*." She apparently expressed the view that the book advocated "free love" and Hardy must have recognised that she found it uncongenial. By contrast he despatched a copy of the book to Agnes Grove immediately, with the assurance that, "You are, I know, sufficiently broad of view

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to estimate without bias a tragedy of very unconventional lives."

Jude was published less than two months after the encounter in the Larmer Tree Gardens, so no time had been lost in following up their first acquaintance. "To dance with a man", Hardy had written in *The Return of the Native*, "is to concentrate a twelvemonth's regulation fire upon him in the fragment of an hour": to the truth of which he bore testimony by his almost instant readiness to encourage Agnes in her inexperienced attempts to write for publication. In the role of professional mentor he was most at ease, praising her spirit and sincerity in the writing of an article that she had submitted to him; and then instructing her in ways to improve it and offering to send it to the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* with a covering letter.

A few weeks earlier Hardy had written to Mrs Henniker, "I cannot be of much service in saying anything that will commend your stories to an editor or publisher"—a puzzling remark which followed closely on Hardy's account of himself as overwhelmed with requests from editors for short stories, to which he added the teasing comment "Why didn't you go on being my pupil, so that I could have recommended you as a substitute!" It is plain enough that in the winter of 1895, although the underlying friendship was not endangered, Florence Henniker was being replaced by the beautiful Mrs Grove as the favoured literary pupil.

WHAT SHE ENJOYED in those first months of tuition was perforce a correspondence course, though Hardy assured her at the outset that he wanted to meet her again and carry further the conversation they had begun in the Larmer Tree Gardens. No opportunity to do so occurred until the following spring, however. In the early months of the year Agnes was in poor health, but on 23 March she travelled to London; and two days later she wrote in her diary "Mr. Thomas Hardy came to see me." She soon returned home and their correspondence was resumed over an idea that Hardy had suggested during the winter. Some comments made by Agnes, after reading *Jude*, about Sue's talk with Father Time had seemed to Hardy a good basis for an article entitled "What should children be told?" He urged her to write it. After their London meeting the thought returned to him and served as the pretext for a letter to her, in which he offered to read her draft, if she would send it to him.

Agnes must have responded promptly. During April 1896 there was a flurry of letters between them, with Hardy advising, correcting "ruthlessly" and finally polishing the article. At the last minute he changed his mind about submitting it to the *New Review* and sent it instead to the *Free Review*. Agnes's gratitude he brushed aside with "The trouble has been nothing. You are such a good little pupil that it is a pleasure to offer you suggestions." When the *Free Review* was slow in replying Hardy kindly took it upon himself to "wake them up."

After a visit to a liberal rally at Trowbridge where she met the Asquiths as fellow-guests, Agnes returned to London on 18 May. Three days later she went to tea with the Hardys in Kensington where they were staying until July. The following day they returned the visit, and a fortnight later Agnes met Hardy and Emma at the Asquiths' party. During the remainder of the season they continued to meet in a variety of circumstances—at tea-parties and at more formal occasions like the wedding of Lady Jeune's daughter Dorothy Stanley to Henry Allhusen. The Stanley connection meant that Hardy's principal London hostess—Lady Jeune—was, by her first marriage, Agnes's aunt. In the closely knit London society of the '90s Hardy and Agnes would have had chance encounters as fellow-guests in addition to their planned meetings. Lady Queensberry was a mutual friend. Lady Wynford was another. And Lord Crewe

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had not been passive since Agnes's visit to Dublin in 1895. In January 1896 he sent her two volumes of Rossetti's poems. His sisters, Lady Fitzgerald and Mrs Henniker, were in London during the season of 1896 and it was at the Hardys that the "good little pupil" met Florence Henniker—possibly, though not necessarily, for the first time. The occasion was one of those intimate tea-parties that Hardy apparently liked to have. The other guests were Lady Fitzgerald and the Henry Normans; Hamilton Aidé, an old friend of Sir Arthur Blomfield's—the London architect for whom Hardy had worked; Hamo Thornycroft, the sculptor; and the poet and critic Lionel Johnson, who had published *The Art of Thomas Hardy* two years earlier.

With the acceptance of Agnes's article by the *Free Review* Hardy began to address her as "My Dear Friend", or to sign himself "Ever yr. friend." Agnes responded by sending him a photograph of herself which Hardy evidently valued. He continued to foster her literary career with personal notes to editors and careful correction of her drafts and proofs. And when the year concluded he wrote her the equivalent of an end-of-term report, congratulating her on the progress she had made and noting with satisfaction that she was becoming quite well known by her writings.

He clearly took pleasure in her success. Two days earlier he wrote to Mrs Henniker, "Agnes Grove has another article about to appear—did she tell you?" There was perhaps a touch of malice in the question. He felt that Florence Henniker had grown away from the tutelage he hoped to exercise, and he was indicating that in Agnes Grove he had found an apt pupil eager to fill the place that Mrs Henniker had surrendered. There was evidently no animosity or rivalry between the two women, however; on the contrary they became increasingly friendly. Agnes's diary in 1898 records numerous meetings with the Hennikers or with Florence alone. They dined at each other's houses, went to the opera together, and in the summer Agnes stayed with the Hennikers at Eton. The earlier formality of references to "Mrs Henniker" gives way to "Flo Henniker." Both women, one suspects, were shrewd enough to estimate accurately the permissible scope of their relationship with Hardy.

A seismic graph of Hardy's romantic responsiveness during the '90s would show a disturbance of major intensity starting in May 1893, with his visit to Dublin, and persisting through his early association with Florence Henniker. By the summer of 1895 this disturbance had spent its main force when it was replaced by a second disturbance, of lesser but still powerful intensity, dating from the visit to Rushmore and the Larmer Tree Gardens. This followed the same course of close attention by correspondence and meetings during the first twelve months, subsequently settling down to a more composed and relaxed friendship.

IN MAKING a comparison between the two women there are one or two factors that stand out. The first is a difference in age. Hardy was only fifteen years older than Florence Henniker, but from Agnes Grove he was separated by a generation gap—twenty-four years, to be precise. Mrs Henniker had met him originally as a friend of her brother; to Agnes he was a friend of her father. The distinction is not unimportant. Agnes appears to defer to Hardy's seniority in a way that would hardly have come instinctively to Mrs Henniker, who seems to have accepted the unforced equality of contemporaries—as of an elder brother, figuratively, rather than an uncle.

In temperament Agnes was a more flamboyant, vigorous, crusading spirit. She was active, and indeed combative, in the causes of Liberalism, Women's Suffrage, Anti-Vivisection and Anti-Vaccination. Like her Stanley aunts she enjoyed the intellectual world of ideas, of social reform, of public debate, of speech-making and committee work. Florence Henniker's literary *métier* was imaginative and artistic: Agnes was a journalist, happiest with subjects that were topical and controversial. What evidently impressed Hardy in her writing at an early stage was a blend of sincerity and honesty which he considered would compel even her most uncompromising opponents to treat her with respect.

That he should find pleasure in the company of elegant and witty young women, endowed with aristocratic style and personal beauty, is a trait that hardly merits the air of disapproving surprise that it sometimes receives. Hardy needed the stimulus of feminine companionship, and more specifically the occasional adventure of exploring a fresh romantic encounter—no matter how tenuous might be its connection with reality. And like many another great artist he could relish those tender flatteries in which nothing venal or vulgar appeared. What is interesting is his own highly individual way of controlling and metabolising these special relationships and ultimately transferring his well-beloveds into a sort of private pantheon. Here they acquired—so far as he was concerned—a timeless quality, a sort of immortality that he crystallised sooner or later in a poem.

So it was that, for the thirty years of life that remained for her, Agnes Grove was able to count on an unwavering friendship from Hardy, just

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as Florence Henniker could. Agnes continued as his "pupil" through the '90s, submitting her articles to him and receiving detailed and painstaking assistance. By the turn of the century she had sufficient assurance to publish her first book. Others followed, one of them being *The Social Fetish* in 1907 which she dedicated to Hardy. In Edwardian Society she became an arbiter of what was "U" and what "Non-U", thereby anticipating a great granddaughter of one of her Stanley aunts. In a letter to Lady Dorothy Nevill, Frederic Harrison wrote "I make heroic efforts to see you whenever I have to be '*in town*' —an expression which Lady Grove says is *vulgar*—is it?—you know!" In her own letters to her children Agnes constantly inculcated the little shibboleths of phrase and pronunciation that served as invisible badges of membership in Edwardian society.

The fact that Agnes belonged to Wessex was perhaps an added bond. Her friendship with Hardy was not an exclusively London affair. In a letter of February 1900 he wrote of his intentions to ride his bicycle in the summer to her home at Sedgehill, and he urged her to visit him again when she next came into the vicinity of Dorchester. She had recently driven to Max Gate with Ivor Guest, and in the following month she returned. Her diary records "March 15. Left London 3, arrived Dorchester 6.30. Mrs Hardy met me at station. Pleasant dinner and long talk after with Hardy. March 16. Left Dorchester after luncheon . . . arrived Smedmore." The next day Hardy wrote to her "I have had misgivings as to how you reached Smedmore—and pictured you stranded at Corfe Castle, and compelled to rig up a tent out of your luggage and sleep under the ruined tower. It was a pity you did not stay till the 5.7 train."

The Edwardian years saw Agnes Grove at the peak of her career as a public figure. Although she was 37 at the turn of the century, with a family of four growing children (and in 1904 a fifth), her beauty and her zest for life were in full flower. In 1901 she made a long and adventurous journey through Morocco and met the Sultan. She was the only member of the party who was "never for a single day *hors de combat*—the others all succumbed for a more or less space of time." With a nice touch of humour she commented "they got rather tired of hearing this fact; I never did." In London she was active as President of the Forward Suffrage Union and as a literary hostess entertaining Max Beerbohm, Cunninghame-Graham, Hilaire Belloc, Anthony Hope and other prominent authors. She engaged Bernard Shaw in a controversy about God that drew from Bertrand Russell an amusing letter, in which he wrote—

> You and Shaw both believe too much for me. . . . But I particularly dislike Shaw's view that the creation of himself shows that God is coming on.

Praised for having the courage of her opinions Agnes wrote, "It is much more difficult for me not to give my opinion than to give it—what causes me to do so, therefore, is not courage."

For her, as for so many others, 1914 marked the end of the world in which she shone. By the 1920s she was out of vogue as a writer, and virtually confined to her home at Sedgehill by the decline in the Grove fortunes. The travels abroad and the London establishment were no longer possible. A journey into Shaftesbury by a decrepit motorcycle and sidecar to buy some cheap meat was now an event to be noted. The imperious temper turned at times on her gentle ineffectual husband, who suffered uncomplainingly the blows of his "dear little pepperpot" as he termed her. For one who had queened it in the great world the last years of impecunious obscurity must have been hard to bear. The genuine warmth of affection within her family was a powerful consolation: so also, I believe, was the friendship with Hardy.

Each year she liked to write to Hardy on his birthday. She found the money to be among the first to subscribe to the Duke of Wellington's appeal for a Thomas Hardy Chair of Literature. As late as the spring of 1925 she was planning another visit to Max Gate. The following year she died—leaving behind a legend of the beautiful woman who once had danced by the light of the Vauxhall lamps on the lawns of the Larmer Tree Gardens with a poet.

In his mind's eye she had shed none of her beauty in the passage of thirty years. Death had in no way defaced her. Hardy could picture her, lying

> *white, straight, features marble-keen,*
> *Unapproachable, mute, in a nook I have never seen.*

As his imagination played about the memories that returned to him he strove to recapture the classical loveliness which had stirred him on that first romantic occasion—and which now was beyond time and place.

> *There she may rest like some vague goddess, shaped*
> *As out of snow;*
> *Say Aphrodite sleeping; or bedraped*
> *Like Kalupso;*
> *Or Amphitrite stretched on the Mid-sea swell,*
> *Or one of the Nine grown stiff from thought.*
> *I cannot tell!*

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Dangerous Pilgrimages

Transatlantic Images in Fiction (II)—By MALCOLM BRADBURY

Presently he heard footsteps approach and, without moving, could see they were a woman's. Feet, ankles, calves came progressively into view. Like every pair in the country they were slim and neatly covered. Which came first in this strange civilization, he wondered, the foot or the shoe, the leg or the nylon stocking? Or were these uniform elegant limbs, from the stocking-top down, marketed in one cellophane envelope at the neighbourhood store? Did they clip by some labour-saving device to the sterilized rubber privacies above?

Evelyn Waugh, THE LOVED ONE (1948)

Though he has followed the recent history of the United States in the newspapers, though he is well aware, cognitively, that it has become more than ever a violent and melodramatic land, riven by deep divisions of race and ideology, traumatized by political assassinations, the campuses in revolt, the cities seizing up, the countryside poisoned and polluted—emotionally it is still for him a kind of Paradise, the place where he was once happy and may be so once again.

David Lodge, CHANGING PLACES (1975)

ANY DEVOTED READER of the English and the European novel in the years since the last war (one hopes there are some) will probably have observed and reflected upon the presence, in many of these works, of a theme, an issue, a motif which appears to have acquired an especial contemporary charge. The theme is, quite simply, the voyage to, or the refraction of, America. Today, it seems, novelists have a recurrent preoccupation with this image and its pull; in German and French, Scandinavian and Italian, English and Irish writing, one can find authors risking their sensibility and form in an American encounter, taking their characters there, for good or bad, feeling their way into psychic situations and formal complexities found on the American shore, distilling an image of modernity or anonymity, of liberation or experiential extremity, for which the United States offers the one appropriate objective correlative.

The images that emerge are not always complementary, sometimes profoundly hostile; but then so they often are in contemporary American fiction. The important fact is that many contemporary writers, whatever their political or moral view of America, evidently feel that to encounter modern experience and to realise modern form they have to reckon with the States, by visiting it in fact or in imagination. For the United States is today in every sense a nuclear power, a focus of political and cultural event. In our lifetimes we have seen every sign of America's tending to take over from the great European cities the capital function of artistic exchange and innovation. Many of the age's best poets and novelists, dramatists and musicians painters and film-makers go there, as émigrés, or occasional visitors. Even when they do not, America is here in Europe, in that deep penetration of American power, American capital, American images we call Americanisation. In the world of our politics and the world of our play, we encounter—either directly, or by imitation or parody—the image of, the images from, America. It is logical enough that many are given the elaboration and complexity of art.

All this is a fact of the modern balance of political and cultural power; however, the affair is not at all new in Europe. Indeed, as I said in my first article (ENCOUNTER, December 1976), it is a very deep-rooted matter, going back to classical and Renaissance European thought. The American motif was there before America was actually discovered. And once the discoveries had occurred, they produced such "waves of returning shock" (as Fredi Chiappelli puts it in his editorial preface to *First Images of America*[1])

[1] *First Images of America: The Impact of the Old World on the New.* Edited by FREDI CHIAPPELLI. 2 vols, boxed. University of California Press, $75.00, £50.00. This handsome compilation, the proceedings of an international congress held at UCLA in February 1975, is an admirable work collecting modern scholarship on the topic from many countries; it covers the enormous range of the American impact throughout Europe, in literature, myth, political thought, legal, moral and theological matters, the arts, in geography, population movement and migration, science and trade, disease, primarily in the Renaissance, though reaching through to 1800.

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that "many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europeans strained every resource of mind and imagination to grasp [America's] significance." In the Renaissance, America penetrated everywhere, to become the "brave new world" central to the period's imagination. And, not surprisingly, the motif had an especial power in art, the place where the mixture of fiction and reality of which the discoveries were constituted might marvellously interweave.

The motif stretched right across Europe, and it passed from nation to nation, from text to text: from Tasso, and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, to Montaigne's speculations on savages and cannibals; from More's *Utopia*, that complex speculation about an alternative social order, set in a western world, to Shakespeare's *Tempest*, with its marvellous magical island made out of the innovating mind; from Marlowe's imperial expansionism to Marvell's lush abundances and Donne's sexual newfoundland. In the different nations of Europe different mythologies accumulated, to create distinct national bodies of metaphoric association, different uses for the real and the ideal America. (The Italians tended to speculate on strange civilisations, the French on savages, the Renaissance English on the restoration, in the West, of the chivalric golden age.) But then, with a continent that was found to stretch from pole to pole, from wilderness to savannah to desert to jungle, there were many Americas at which to look, and many quests to be fulfilled there: for El Dorado, for the Fountain of Youth, for the new religious City on the Hill, for Eden or Paradise Regained. From the very start, too, the myths generated the anti-myths, and the gestures of rejection. As John H. Elliott has argued,[2] there were always doubts, and a less than wholehearted reception of the American lesson:

> It is asking a good deal of any society to take to heart the lessons which may be learnt from foreigners, especially when it has defeated and subjugated them. . . . Renaissance Europe . . . approached the outer world with a combination of prejudice, curiosity, and caution.

It was this mixture of idealism and suspicion which underlay most of the subsequent responses: in the process the myths were qualified, the fantasies brought closer to reality. Rationalism was applied to utopianism, especially in the 18th century. And it was in the 18th century that the new form of the novel developed as a key artistic venture in Europe. It, too, was a compound of the old romance and utopian tradition and the new realism, scepticism, empiricism; Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, given a new island world and a savage companion, exercises a rational common sense over both. The novel-form embodied the tradition of the chivalric and wonderful, but it also learned, from *Don Quixote*, that ur-novel, to see windmills as actual windmills, not knights, to qualify the flights of imagination against fact.

It is not surprising, then, that it repeatedly turned to the American motif as its subject-matter, seeking and doubting myths and alternative worlds. By the end of the 18th century, rationalism softened. The romantic appeal of America was renewed in political form by the revolution. Romantic literature wandered through alternative social orders, through boundary lands between the civilised and the savage; it invested, too, in the thought of a radical new history, where the pristine unity lost in the corruptions and falsities of history might be apocalyptically redeemed (Blake, seeking to restore "what the Ancients call'd the Golden Age", looked alternately to the imagination, and to America). In America itself, the novel became a key expressive form, especially in the mode of romance. In Europe, for reformist and revolutionary writers the American myth had a deep allure; for conservative writers it represented danger and threat. These motifs acquired powerful associations, and they readily contend in European fiction, German, French, and English—though, yet again, with different national emphases, different weights and balances.

THUS THE ROMANCE OF America and the sceptical, qualified realistic account of America became contending themes. There can be no more perfectly romantic text than Chateaubriand's short novel *Atala* (1801), which represents one crucial side of the European imagination of the early 19th century. Set in that "delightfully beautiful country, called by the people of the United States, the New Eden, and named by the French, musically, Louisiana", in a landscape of great swamps and numinous nature, it is about the meeting of the romantic Frenchman, René, "driven by his passions and sorrows", who meets the Indian, Chactas, the man of nature, "the savage man whom the Great Spirit . . . has wished to civilise." Christianity and paganism merge in a pastoral world, beautiful and dignified; the European imagination was energised to dream and hope by the result. But equally appropriate to the response of the European imagination is Charles Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

[2] John H. Elliott, "Renaissance Europe and America: A Blunted Impact", in *First Images of America*. Also see his *The Old World and the New, 1492–1650* (Cambridge, 1970).

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Here too is a voyage to the New Eden, but it is a pestilential swamp; romantic agony and awareness is replaced by human selfishness; the myth is a false lure. Dickens's is a disappointed realist's answer to the romantic portrait. And his is, in European terms, one of many; the record is one of text and counter-text.

In due course, the responses reversed: as, by the end of the 19th century, the metaphoric meaning of America changed, from a romantic nation to an industrial one, from a place of simple freedoms and social innovations to a place of process, capitalism, melting-pot cities and technology, the conservative rather than the radical imagination was captured by the American dream. Radicals saw darker pictures. The dream did not go; it was sustained by the pressure and push of the millions of immigrants who crossed the Atlantic in the years after the Civil War. But it complicated. In the solemn Scandinavian novels of Moburg and Rolvaag, it was largely a dream of independence and of encounter with nature, but in the novels of displaced Jewish migrants, like Abraham Cahan and Henry Roth, it became an ambiguous encounter with the problems of cities and the loneliness of ethnic loss. German novelists like Sealsfield could write of successful migration; others, like Kurnberger, wrote of disappointed quests, and reassured those who stayed in Europe.

Moreover, America increasingly shaped the spirit of modern fantasy. Versions of the Indian and the savage (as in Karl May's Shatterhand novels) vied with the futuristic America of technical wonders (as in Wells and Verne). This was a play-America that was to acquire increasing fascination in popular culture. It was built, like the film and television myths of the present, on an old pastoral America and a new technetronic one. Tale and counter-tale proliferated, and of course they did not destroy each other but simply complicated the mythology. America was part of the social and political choices facing Europe, and also part of its dreams of freedom and escape from threat or despotism. It was also part of its fear for the future. And it was, finally, part of its imaginative enrichment, its fabulation and its play.

The motif, then, spread through many kinds of sensibility, many forms, and many levels of writing. In England, however, the pattern was somewhat different from that in the rest of Europe. What is very notable is that the English range of treatments of America was, in fiction, strikingly narrow, less deeply invested with fantasy and imagination, less important. America had long been there in English fiction; Defoe, for example, has American episodes both in *Moll Flanders* and in *Colonel Jack*. But it was not *strongly* there. It was most commonly present in serious writing as a convenient stage left—a place to which heroes might go to be well out of the action, or whence new characters might suddenly come. It acquired no great mythical intent, no strong revolutionary function; perhaps the only consistent revolutionary portrait comes in Thackeray's treatment of George Washington in *The Virginians* (1857–59). This was not because the American question had no significance for English writers or readers. On the contrary, it was a crucial, divisive issue in English culture.

In the 18th century the social thinkers, notably Hobbes and Locke, had reflected on the American alternative. After the Revolution, the question engaged the attention of the Romantic poets; and America was much debated in politico-cultural circles throughout the 19th century. To the Chartist and liberal mind, America stood as the Beacon of Freedom, the Land of Liberty; Cobden and Bright were known in the Commons as the Members for the United States. Many Englishmen and women, often novelists, visited the United States and wrote their America books, a custom of the century, renewed in ours: some favourable, some not. But the matter found a relatively small place in fiction, with the one exception of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Indeed America in the novel played rather a role consistent with Oscar Wilde's observation, in *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* (1890), that America had never been discovered, but merely detected (" 'Oh! but I have seen specimens of the inhabitants', answered the Duchess, vaguely"). One might sense here an element of political caution, though the real reason is perhaps other—the 19th-century English novel has a fascination with manners and society, a strongly domestic obsession, and an aversion to indulging a myth. There was also the fact that American novelists themselves were publishing in London as well as in the States; the major American novels were freely available. Even so, when English writers did write of the States, the lesson drawn was not uncommonly a cautious one: America may be a nice place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there.

THIS BIAS HAS NOT BEEN OVERLOOKED by American commentators; some, like Edmund Wilson, have awarded an unpleasant interpretation to it; the British are supercilious chauvinists. American 19th-century commentators often thought so, and Henry James, in "An International Episode" (1878), portrays his English characters in America as notably indifferent, and superior, to the American Eden, the paradisial new world. It was, of course, an attitude to which he acquired a certain sympathy; Eden *could* be

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oversold. None the less Matthew Arnold's view that America is not interesting seems to have vied in literary feelings with the view that it is too interesting, risky, damaging.

It is not entirely surprising that A. J. Liebling, reviewing Graham Greene's *The Quiet American* (1955) in *The New Yorker*, should sum up the old resentment. That book, he says, is an exercise in national projection which

> made me realize that Mr Greene . . . trapped on the moving staircase of history, was registering a classical reaction to a situation familiar to me and Spengler. When England, a French cultural colony, outstripped the homeland after Waterloo and the Industrial Revolution, all that remained for the French to say was, "Nevertheless, you remain nasty, overgrown children." The Italians of the Renaissance said it to the French, and I suppose the Greeks said it to the Romans. It is part of the ritual of handing over.

There is an element of truth here. Yet Greene's novel, set in South-east Asia (in fact a more common wonderland for English writers than America, especially since Conrad, and deriving some of its power from the undoubted fact that British imaginative investment abroad tended to follow the Empire), is, if touched with political patronage, a remarkably shrewd politico-psychological portrait of the American mind abroad, an apt text for anyone wishing to understand Viet Nam. One man's patronage *can* be another man's realism.

But perhaps what most needs emphasis is that the English novel tradition in general has shown a marked disposition to distrust *all* alternate lands of the imagination. The tendency to domesticate myth has been part of the empiricism of the English novel. And this has often applied to the treatment of the American theme, if with remarkable exceptions—D. H. Lawrence, for example, and Malcolm Lowry. There is a plot of considerable persistence that seems to run through those English novels that, over the years, have explored the American theme. It is the plot of the English voyager who goes to the States in search of liberty or liberation, spiritual insight or self-advancement, only to have his purposes confounded, and so to return home, having learned a gloomy lesson. The lesson may be to the disadvantage of the United States, or to that of the English sensibility; he fails simply to live up to the dream. Or, to explain the matter in another way, we may note that ever since *Martin Chuzzlewit* there has been a marked disposition to treat America, as many another grand theme, in terms of *comedy*. And the comic bias has been an essential aspect of the English novel, which consequently abounds more in tales of spiritual failure than of success, fables of scepticism rather than fulfilment. But in this particular sequence, one can see signs of an

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historical shift, a declining suggestion that America does not live up to the traveller, an increasing suggestion that the traveller does not live up to America. If, more and more, America has come to stand for the modern, this is an interesting fable of willed supercession, of guilty provincialism; it tells us quite a lot about the contemporary English temper.

FOR THESE REASONS it can be urged that, if one wants to look for the ur-book about the English reaction to America, find a work that compounds both America's elaborate myth *and* the English realistic response to it, then one need go no further than Dickens's sixth novel, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*. It is a lengthy work, and in total proportions the episode which takes the younger Martin Chuzzlewit to the United States is relatively brief. None the less, Dickens picks up all the central motifs that had become associated with the United States in mid-19th-century Europe: the romantic associations of Chateaubriand (to whom he alludes), the realistic records of the English travellers, who influenced him, the myth of the immigrant dream (Martin travels steerage with the immigrants on his voyage), the Chartist theme of the Land of Liberty, the dream of republican equality in a land without titles, the romance of westward voyaging, the Edenic appeal of the wilderness.

Dickens actually decided to add the American episodes after he had started the book, to revive flagging sales, a decision not unusual with him; the result is that some critics have seen the section as an intrusion, shifting the book to a more bitter tone.[3] In fact Dickens tried hard to integrate them, as he says in his Preface[4] ("I have endeavoured in the progress of this Tale, to resist the temptation of the current Monthly Number, and to keep a steadier eye upon the general purpose and design"), and he explains there is a primary issue, Selfishness, which had moulded the book. The American passages were attacked, so he offers a defence of them, saying that his portrait was

> in no other respect a caricature than as it is an exhibition, for the most part, of the ludicrous side of the American character—of that side which is, from its very nature, the most obtrusive. . . .

There *is* a difference between the English and American sections, about which I will say more; but there is no doubt that the American passages are not only consistent with the "selfishness" theme but are (despite their local satire and their often episodic nature) a fable of the inward development of Martin himself.

Certainly Dickens did *not* like America. This is somewhat surprising, since, like most radicals, he was keen to visit it (many of the most devastating European critiques of America in this period were, however, by men attracted by its ideals and disappointed in their practice). "This is not the republic of my imagination", he had told W. C. Macready. So disturbed was Dickens by his first visit, just before he wrote the novel, that it has been urged that the book enacts some mental crisis Dickens underwent during his American months—a facet of the American experience not uncommon in subsequent literature. Europeans went to the United States to see the future; they did not always like it. But deeper disturbances could be involved. The visit and the book certainly coincide with a darkening of Dickens's vision, a deeper notion of selfishness, a more intense awareness of psychic distortion and psychic need (though the book does also contain some of his most buoyant comic characters and his best comic episodes).

The novel is indeed decidedly bleaker than Dickens's non-fictional record of the visit, *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842)—a book that, alas, does not tell us directly what disillusioned him. He went with excitement, was received warmly, if rawly, as a celebrity. He *was* attacked in the American press for his assaults on the Copyright issue. But his disillusionment seems to have come as much from American hospitality as criticism. "I vow to Heaven that the scorn and indignation I have felt under this unmanly and ungenerous treatment have been to me an amount of agony such as I have never experienced since my birth", he said in a letter about the Copyright attacks. But a letter celebrating the American virtues—Americans are "friendly, earnest, hospitable, kind, frank, very often accomplished, far less prejudiced than you would suppose, warm-hearted, fervent, and enthusiastic . . . chivalrous . . . courteous, obliging, disinterested"—goes on: "I think it impossible, utterly impossible, for any Englishman to live here, and be happy."

This was a time when a visitor could feel uncomfortable, for there was a commonplace Anglophobia and a pro-Irish feeling. Americans were looking covetously at British territorial rights in the Pacific; an adventurist mood prevailed; the American press, widely noted for its personal and political prejudice and vilification,

[3] For an admirable discussion of this issue, see Barbara Hardy, "*Martin Chuzzlewit*", in John Gross and Gabriel Pearson, editors, *Dickens and the Twentieth Century* (London, 1962).

[4] Dickens's various prefaces for the book are usefully reprinted in P. N. Furbank's edition of *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* in the Penguin English Library (1968).

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was notably strong. It was also, though, a period of great mental energy, of what F. O. Matthiessen has called the American Renaissance. Dickens's reports are doubtless true, and we can see that several features must have galled him; even so, the notion that there was some real change and disturbance in his life and feelings seems very probable indeed, especially if we look to the novel.[5]

THE VISIT WAS IN the first half of 1842; by the end of the year *American Notes* was finished and published; then he started the novel, which appeared in monthly parts in 1843–44. Its main setting is England, unsparingly presented itself, as an England of greed and selfishness; its primary landscape is set in the countryside round Salisbury, then in London, dominated by the strange shadow of the Monument which casts itself across the book. The young Martin Chuzzlewit, central to the American episode, is not the main figure: the hypocritical Mr Pecksniff, the murderous Jonas, the comical Mrs Gamp, the gentle Tom Pinch all have more weight. But Martin is the displaced, picaresque figure, out to discover his luck, position, and nature; and the book's structure is picaresque.

Dispossessed by his guardian, cast out by the plotting Mr Pecksniff, faced with the loss of the girl he loves, he goes off on the appropriate voyage to make his fortune with his Sancho Panza Mark Tapley, the servant who attaches himself to Martin because he is looking for some really severe misfortune to make his unrelieved cheerfulness into true virtue. Martin sets off from country to city. America is the only solution, though the omens are bleak: on the cart to London he hears of Lummy Ned, who went to America to make a fortune, only to lose it the day after, "in six-and-twenty banks as broke." Tom Pinch and Mary, the girl he loves, both warn him not to go. Altogether it is a plot of comic roundness, raising the expectation that Martin will one day return, like Tom Jones, to love and position after his folly has been purged. His folly is impetuosity and selfishness, the utter failure to consider others or recognise misfortune; so the voyage must resolve these aspects of his nature. In short, Dickens's theme is again that of the great expectations that both sustain and delude his

[5] An excellent discussion of Dickens's unhappiness in America and its possibly psychological character can be found in John S. Whitley and Arnold Goldman, "Introduction" to Charles Dickens, *American Notes for General Circulation* (Penguin English Library, 1972). Most of my quotations from Dickens's letters are from this source; also from M. House, G. Storey and K. Tillotson, editors, *The Letters of Charles Dickens, Vol. 3: 1842–1844* (Oxford University Press, 1974).

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characters, making them feel men of rank while they live in poverty, causing them to ignore their fellows in misfortune, and chase financial opportunities containing insidious elements of corruption. With all of this Dickens makes America fit.

Martin sails to America amid the already threatened expectations of the uncomfortable immigrant ship; but *his* dreams are grander than those of the others, and also more deluded. Told on arrival that the American intelligentsia is one not of rank but intelligence and virtue, qualities that in turn produce dollars, he is "glad to hear this, feeling well assured that . . . he would speedily become a great capitalist." A quick introduction to the down-at-heel successes of New York City, each bearing a title of some sort (General, Colonel, Professor), each described as "one of the most remarkable men in our country", dampens his impressions but not his hopes. The Almighty Dollar is the end in view, and Dickens populates this part of the book with speculators, politicians and journalists, of the timbre of Major Pawkins who

> In commercial affairs . . . was a bold speculator. In plainer words he had a most distinguished genius for swindling, and could start a bank, or negotiate a loan, or form a land-jobbing company (entailing ruin, pestilence, and death, on hundreds of families), with any gifted creature in the Union. This made him an admirable man of business. He could hang around a bar-room, discussing the affairs of the nation, for twelve hours together; and in that time could hold forth with more intolerable dullness, chew more tobacco, smoke more tobacco, drink more rum-toddy, mint-julep, gin-sling, and cock-tail, than any private gentleman of his acquaintance. This made him an orator and a man of the people.

Dickens is interested at once in particular detail and in satire, and above all satire of the disparity between the American dream and the Almighty Dollar. It is the same theme as in the English chapters: Mr Pecksniff is the money-hungry hypocrite too. The difference is that where he is part of a larger English scene, so his faults are as much personal as national, the American hypocrisy is seen as part of the national "cant."

In America, corrupt politics are idealised as the Spirit of Republicanism; low commerce is evidence of industriousness and energy; snobbery is disguised under claims to "brotherly love and natural equality"; behind the libertarian discourse is slavery, and above all the Dollar itself ("Make commerce one huge lie and mighty theft. Deface the banner of the nation for an idle rag; pollute it star by star; and cut out stripe by stripe as from the arm of a degraded soldier. Do anything for dollars!"). And Dickens's main concern is really to distinguish between high principles and low practices, which put in hazard "the rights of nations yet unborn, and the very progress of the human race"; Dickens has, in fact, his American dream—part-manifest in his one virtuous American, Mr Bevan—which the actuality in general does not fulfil. The consequence is that Martin has few affirmative glimpses of America, little exposure to people or institutions that might enlarge his hopes.

But the essential point is that Martin is on a delusory journey anyway, through various stages (the initiatory experiences in New York: the episode in the National Hotel and the Eden Settlement Office: the disastrous experience in Eden itself; the return journey with Martin in changed heart). Part of the time Dickens is inventing comic characters, most of them the most remarkable men in the States, all of them concerned to hold Martin to ransom for his European corruption, his failure to value America and recognise its inhabitants' cleverness, egalitarianism, and natural innocence. Some of the comedy depends on Martin being treated as a celebrity, which Dickens was, but Martin is not; this is slightly forced but very funny. Everything from American womanhood, American politics and American culture-hunger to the spirit of Transcendentalism comes under the hammer.

ALL THIS IS, HOWEVER, very episodic; what unites the material finally is Dickens's key theme, the mythic voyage itself. For what Martin is bound for is Eden, the place of innocence and the paradisial garden. "What are the great United States for, sir", asks General Choke, who is good enough to promise Martin "a reasonable opening in Eden", "if not for the regeneration of man?" Inspected on the map in the Eden Settlement Office, Eden is a flourishing architectural city in the wilderness, where Martin, himself trained as an architect, can do his mite. But Mr Scadder, the agent, a man with two distinct sides to his face, is the prototypical confidence-man and the dark figure from fable who leads heroes into misfortune. The journey is full of dark warnings; Eden, when found, proves a derelict half-settlement in a Mississippi River swamp, foetid, like "the grim domains of the Giant Despair." Disease prevails, agriculture has ceased, the few cabins are collapsing into the mud:

> the most tottering, abject and forlorn among them was called, with great propriety, the Bank, and National Credit Office. It had some feeble props about it, and was settling deep down in the mud, past all recovery.

Here Martin catches the prevailing pestilence; so does Mark, who has protected him. But now Martin learns a bleak lesson, which is not of man's primal innocence, but of his need for self-aware experience:

> Eden was a hard school to learn so hard a lesson in;

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but there were teachers in the swamp and thicket, and the pestilential air, who had a searching method of their own.

Martin recognises the harmful power of "Self, Self, Self", and the falsity of an inner landscape that presumes man's Adamic innocence. The terrestrial paradise is blighted from within as well as from without: "he felt and knew the failing of his life, and saw distinctly what an ugly spot it was." Thus, when Martin leaves America, and has a vision of its phoenix rebirth, "springing from the ashes of its faults and vices, and soaring up anew into the sky", this is both a portrait of Dickens's high expectations for America, and a figure for Martin's own spiritual renewal. Throughout all this, the mythic temptations are clustered—the idea of the new start, of equality, of arcadian paradise, of an advanced society, are all taken and then disoriented; Martin can only grow from self-knowledge, not through utopian dream.

But there are other important motifs: Dickens alludes to the old American voyages yet he creates, too, America as a modern, contemporary society, a world of machines and industry as well as nature and mock-innocence. This involves him, technically, in a degree of stylistic difference. For Dickens's England in the novel is modern, but not quite contemporary; journeys from Salisbury to London are taken by stage and cart, offices are musty, the older world persists. But America is futuristic, and calls for different acts of the imagination. This stylistic difference becomes very marked, because Dickens cross-cuts from his American story to his English one. We move suddenly from rural Salisbury to the sound of "an American railway train at full speed." It is machine as metaphor, and Dickens has something to say, finally, about mechanism: "How the wheels clank and rattle, and the tram-road shakes, as the train rushes on! And how the engine yells, as it were lashed and tortured like a living labourer, and writhed in agony", he notes, adding: "A poor fancy; for steel and iron are of infinitely greater account, in this commonwealth, than flesh and blood."[6]

[6] Dickens's backward-and-forward cutting across the Atlantic is done in full knowledge of the power of contrast and the significance of American motifs, and with fascinating mockery of the mythical style. Thus he begins Chapter 33:

> From Mr Moddle to Eden is an easy and natural transition. Mr Moddle, living in the atmosphere of Miss Pecksniff's love, dwelt (if he had but known it) in a terrestrial Paradise. The thriving city of Eden was also a terrestrial Paradise, upon the showing of its proprietors. The beautiful Miss Pecksniff might have been poetically described as something too good for man in his fallen and degraded state. That was exactly the character of the thriving city of Eden. . . .

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Dickens resists this machine future; but also, like many subsequent English writers, he *is* imaginatively drawn to it. His style takes on a new mode of notation, a futurism, which makes these episodes finally a deep encounter not just with an old American motif but with a new one. The seeds of a future imaginative America are in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, giving to the book an innovative texture, a sense of stylistic stress and strain.

THE FACT IS THAT, IN deciding to take *Martin Chuzzlewit* in the American direction, Dickens created a remarkable and complex portrait; its tone, its comedy, even its disappointment, shaped many later European writers in *their* treatment of America. But the book is also a period piece, about mid-Victorian and Chartist disillusion with a particular America. And, with the Civil War, the technological innovation that followed, the growth of trusts and capitalism, America itself came to stand in global terms for something quite different. It was no longer a pastoral dream, but an industrial one; no longer a land of individualistic enterprise, but of collective enterprise; no longer associated with the restoration of a pristine past but with a modernised future. If writers like Moburg and Rolvaag could still represent a movement of individualistic immigration, of men struggling against and with the land, other writers, more appropriately, envisioned an immigrant encounter with the city, with the garment industry, the stockyards, the factory, with the harder facts of urban struggle and success.

American writers themselves reported a much more realistic America; some turned themselves to Europe for a necessary comparison between a solid traditionalism and an American fluidity of motion. European writers now increasingly began to represent an image of America as process and power; they drew on it for science-fiction invention, as did Wells or Verne; they depicted the new energetic capitalism, sometimes with respect (as in Paul Adams's *Le Trust* (1910)), sometimes with apocalyptic satire—as in the ending of Anatole France's *L'Ile des Pingouins* (*Penguin Island*, 1908). The image of America in Europe was transforming much as it was in America itself. And as the radical new American writers of the new century, from Dreiser and Norris, to Sinclair Lewis, Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald, explored a world distant from the agrarian past, dominated by the pressure of modern cities, the psychology of the tycoon, the culture of the booster, the problem of an American dream made meretricious by the power of raw money, so the like motifs appeared in European fiction about America, and quite often with the same mixture of futuristic excitement and of cultural criticism.

Yet there were European writers for whom the primitive and savage America of the old mythology was by no means dead: modernist writers for whom the savage god had power. The most notable instance is of course D. H. Lawrence, who looked to the old dream of a savage and rooted America to take him beyond modern rationalistic society and the weight of Anglo-Saxon consciousness. This was a theme he had started before the war in his *Studies in Classic American Literature*, a book he revised substantially when he was in Taos in the 1920s. "Doom! Doom! Doom!..." he cried in the later, more apocalyptic pages of that book, a study of the masterless race and its drive towards a primitive stoic hardness, "Doom of our white day.... And the doom is in America." Lawrence felt that white American experience had sunk with the Pequod, that the American mind was moving towards its founding aboriginality. It was the Indian who represented the true America.

Moving to the United States, he ignored the eastern states and settled in New Mexico, in 1923, hoping to find the Indian primitive. In the next year he took a trip to Mexico, the first of several, and it is in *The Plumed Serpent* (1926) that he explores in depth this passage into atavism, noting the possibility but also the risk of the American melting pot: "Was it really the great melting pot, where men from the creative continents were smelted back again, not to a new creation, but down to the homogeneity of death." Mexico seemed to take him one step further; though his reaction to it, as well as to Taos, was undoubtedly mixed and disturbed. He was drawn by the land of the Aztecs, the great sun, the idea of a resurrected religion; he also sensed horror and death as well as regeneration. *The Plumed Serpent* registers the ambiguity, though it leaves the heroine in Mexico, which Lawrence left; the theme is also sustained and elaborated through other work of this period—*St Mawr*, "The Princess", "The Woman Who Rode Away" (all 1925) and the uncompleted novel *The Flying Fish* (published in *Phoenix*)—where the encounter with the Indian or the Mexican holds ambiguous possibilities of renewal.

LAWRENCE CONSPICUOUSLY AVOIDED the familiar American experience, of the East Coast, the big city, white America. But Malcolm Lowry, Lawrence's most significant expatriate successor in Mexico, and another neo-modernist writer engaged by the idea of a primitivist metaphysic, wrote his American mythography in tripartite form, dealing with the inferno of New York, the

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purgatorio of Mexico, the paradiso of British Columbia, where he found Eden in a squatter's hut on the foreshore, facing, however, the harbour and an oil refinery sign which, one letter obliterated, flashed HELL. On his visit in 1934, Lowry had been in Bellevue Hospital in New York to receive mental treatment for his alcoholism. It is this experience he records in *Lunar Caustic*, which he began at that time, though it had to wait until 1963 for full publication in a posthumously edited version, after going through many Lowry revisions. "It sure was a funny way to see America", says Dr Claggart of Bellevue, saying farewell to the protagonist, called Bill Plantagenet, at the treatment's end.

The Melville overtone is deliberate; like Lawrence, Lowry's journey starts in American literature, and arrives like a Melvillean hero in reverse, crossing the Atlantic to find the apocalyptic, modernist city, though also looking for Melville's house in New Bedford, itself associated with the white whale's destructive power. Destruction, or self-destruction, is the book's theme; and the motif of destructive voyage is reinforced by the other Bellevue patients, seen ceaselessly staring, like Ishmael at the beginning of *Moby-Dick*, at the sea and ships. The ships are failed messengers of wholeness; the patients respond with a sound,

> partly a cheer and partly a wailing shriek, like some cry of the imprisoned spirit of New York itself, that spirit haunting the abyss between Europe and America and brooding like futurity over the Western Ocean.

Plantagenet in fact comes to America for two things: to find his American wife and bring his jazz band to its spiritual home.

> "She only brought me back as a sort of souvenir from Europe [he tells the doctor]. Perhaps it was America I was in love with. You know, you people get sentimental over England from time to time with your guff about sweetest Shakespeare. Well, this was the other way round. Only it was Eddie Lang and Joe Venuti and the death of Bix. . . . And I wanted to see where Melville lived."

These are very modern images, though they fail the hero. What he finds in New York is the "last frontier" but as modern Dantean inferno. Its turmoil is reinforced by the cataclysmic vision of other patients (who dream of the fall of Pompeii and the destruction of the city), and the sound of the blues. A sense of a "city of dreadful night without splendour" falls on Plantagenet's soul.

In the different versions of the story, the hero is variously a reformist journalist, a musician, and a politically committed left-winger; in all of them, though, the theme is infernal. The hero is led past signs transmitting chaos and exposure—

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Foreword by Robert Murphy

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The Best for Less, Romeo and Juliet, the greatest love story in the world, No Cover at any time, When Pain Threatens, Strikes—to the imprisoning hospital door. A very '30s vision, it contains the period concern with mechanism, urbanism, social collapse, as well as with inner psychic collapse, hallucination, nightmare. The controlling style is expressionistic; images of dereliction and imprisonment, and the machine-like rhythms of hospital and work routine, dominate. There is humanistic concern for others, but it is always coupled with a total sense of impotence and retreat into the tunnel of neurosis. In the final thunderstorm, he has a vision of the paradisial park, but it is withdrawn, and the storm confirms the apocalyptic city of misery and destruction:

> An iceberg hurled northward through the clouds and as it poised in its onrush, tilted, he saw his dream of New York crystallized there for an instant, glittering, illuminated by a celestial brilliance, only to be reclaimed by dark, by the pandemonium of an avalanche of falling coal which, mingled with the cries of the insane speeding the *Providence* on her way, coalesced in his brain with what it conjured of the whole mechanic calamity of the rocking city, with the screaming of suicides, of girls tortured in hotels for transients, of people burning to death in vice dens, through all of which a thousand ambulances were screeching like trumpets.

Lowry's modernistic, waste land city is not, though, the end of the matter. As Douglas Day notes, the book was intended as part of a sequence:

> Apparently, if Lowry had lived long enough to give *Lunar Caustic* the full symbolic treatment, a journey from Europe to New York, and then to the rest of America—with Mexico and Canada—would have been something like a voyage from Inferno to Purgatory to Paradise. But Lowry, one is sure, would never have made it that simple: journeys for him are never only geographical, and hell never in one place.[7]

The geography was that of his own voyage, on to a Mexico of some of his most troubled experiences, in 1936, then back through the States and to squatter's rights at Dollarton with a restorative new marriage in 1940. The sequence is both psychic and mythological; the complex Mexican purgatorio of *Under the Volcano* (1947) fits both his psychic anguish and the state of the country at the time, while some of the stories of *Hear Us O Lord from Heaven Thy Dwelling Place* (posthumous, 1961) and the novella *October Ferry to Gabriola* (1971) reflect both a paradisial situation in nature and a sense of life-renewal in Lowry's psychically complex life.

The result is a mixture of the old and the new motifs: of mythical renewal, of the place of stress and psychic nightmare. This double America, half barbaric, half redemptive, had a special appeal in the 1930s. Writers like Waugh and Greene went to Mexico and South America for its barbarisms and its Catholic existential despair. Other English and European writers in the 1930s migrated to America, for obvious enough reasons: the rise of Fascism and social tension in Europe, the freedom and the supportive economics of the United States. Most had mixed feelings about America, seeing it, in the '30s despairing way, as both the nightmare world of the future and the place of womblike salvation or of new religion or perception.

THROUGHOUT THE 1930s, European writers of liberal or radical conviction found themselves moving for political reasons to the United States: Brecht and Thomas Mann, for example. Others were drawn to the screenwriting possibilities of Hollywood, yet others by the sense that the centre of the European arts was shifting west. In 1937 Aldous Huxley moved into his own brave new world and settled in California, where Gerald Heard was already, whither Christopher Isherwood would move in 1939, when he shifted with Auden to the United States. Personal as well as political reasons were involved. But the images they transmitted back to Europe were influential. There was Heard's, Huxley's and Isherwood's California, a curious compound of cybernetic mechanism and synthetic gloss and spiritual renewal; there was Auden's New York in the age of existential anxiety. Huxley typically mixes his images: of lunatic, mechanised modernity, the bad Brave New World, of radical new modes of perception and redeemed inner insight.

In books like *After Many a Summer* and *Ape and Essence*, Huxley compounds the European terror, of an America dehumanised and scientised, putting its competence into a dark future in which the dream of perpetual youth and of eternal life turns all men into ciphers. Yet a visionary element in all this evidently attracts him—so it is America, too, that seems to offer the possible alternative: a new, more advanced mode of human perception. Huxley, in America, takes his modernistic obsessions to their fullest conclusion. He retains, though, the edge of the European, mindful of a more humanistic, though more traditional, version of society; he also feels

[7] Douglas Day, *Malcolm Lowry: A Biography* (Oxford University Press, 1974), p.204. Lowry's scheme as he put it in a 1946 letter was to make *Under the Volcano* the inferno part of a Dantesque trilogy, *Lunar Caustic* the purgatorial part, and the lost *In Ballast to the White Sea* the paradiso. Day gives good reasons for seeing *Lunar Caustic* as in part at least an inferno rather than a purgatorio; he also has a valuable discussion of the variant versions of the work.

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his way *via* America beyond the degredation and degeneration the 20th century has brought to the west. Isherwood too, of course, had seen that darkening, corrupted Europe, and for a long time he wrote only of it; not until quite late on did he turn to the American theme, in *Down There on a Visit* (1962) and *A Single Man* (1964). America here has not escaped the modern corruptions; yet there are glints of hope in the bright sun. The problem is rather the fate of the Europeanised. In *A Single Man*, the central figure lives in an instantaneous, present-tense world, very American. But it is also a state of despair; he recognises his pathos, his lack of connection, the touch of darkness he has brought with him.

THE '30S FASCINATION with America rebalanced the elements. But the best book to come out of this view of America was not by one of the '30s émigrés. In 1947, Evelyn Waugh went to Hollywood to discuss a film version of *Brideshead Revisited*; the deal collapsed, but Waugh saw enough of Hollywood and California to realise that he had found one of those strange borderlands between civilisation and barbarity in which all his books are set. He had seen the expatriate intellectuals, the mystical wonders, the bland conformities, the strange rituals, the extremities: all these elements go into *The Loved One: An Anglo-American Tragedy* (first printed in Cyril Connolly's *Horizon*, a magazine itself fascinating witness to this generation's love-hate relationship with America, and then in bookform in 1948). Waugh's portrait of America is not kind; but it has that bland distance of criticism, that obsessed fascination with the grotesque, that marks all his best work. America brought out his finest qualities; his capacity to gaze on the modern in comic wonderment and find an anarchic, decadent resistance to its glossy pleasures. Like Dickens, he had already found a modernised barbarism in England too; America though was an extremer case. So *The Loved One* begins on the edge of a desert, with three English voyagers talking; cicadas sound, and there is a pulse of music from nearby native huts; we are, of course, in Los Angeles.

Modernity and barbarity are the themes. The Englishmen there are variants of the old colonisers, now, in changed cultural circumstances, infiltrating Hollywood with their accents and manners. But a man here could collapse and go native; this the hero, Dennis, does—and so, you might say, does Waugh, in his imagination. "Through no wish of my own I have become the protagonist of a Jamesian problem", Dennis thinks, noting that such relationships usually end in tragedy. So does this one, but a tragedy of famous Waugh indifference; for the book is about

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death, a *memento mori* novel, with Dennis as the reminding figure. The main settings are cemeteries: Whispering Glades (based on Forest Lawns), where eternal salvation is offered at inclusive charge as part of the service, where European culture has been preserved and parodied in artificial form (there is a Wee Kirk O' The Heather, and a Lake Isle of Innisfree, with mechanical bees), where works Mr Joyboy, pious, mom-fixated, as Senior Mortician, and also Aimée Thanatagenos, who loves Joyboy till Dennis comes along.

Dennis, however, works at a rival institution; the pet cemetery, consigning animals to the ovens. He is a decadent, half in love with easeful death, a dishonest rogue who finds the flesh naturally corrupt; he functions as the agent of an anarchic, gross mortality in an otherwise bland, cosmeticised and innocent world. His sexual tastes are also decadent; he finds standardised American women unsuited to his wants, coming from "an earlier civilisation with sharper needs." However he recognises in Aimée an immigrant atavism, indeed a rich glint of lunacy. Aimée, tugged between the rivalry of the ethical Mr Joyboy and the dishonest but more interesting Dennis, kills herself. Dennis gives her honourable primitive burial, consigning her body to the ovens in the pet cemetery. By blackmailing Mr Joyboy he makes her fate serve him well, and take him back to England, first class on the Cunarder. And so back to comfortless classicism: Dennis, we are told at the end,

> was adding his bit to the wreckage; something that had long irked him, his young heart, and was carrying back instead the artist's load, a great, shapeless chunk of experience; bearing it home to his ancient and comfortless shore; to work on it hard and long, for God knew how long.

European experience transcends American innocence; but the book is a myth about Waugh's comic-creative process itself. America is conformist, tasteless, hygienic, above all cosmetic, falsifying reality. But it is just this world of modernity deprived of intelligent meaning that is central to Waugh's vision; the result is one of his best books, a black humour novel matching the mood of many American writers in the '60s, when this sort of vision acquired great cultural power.[8]

WITH THE END OF World War Two, and the realignments of the Cold War, the image of America in European fiction now began to change yet again. Western Europe was now under the American military, political and economic umbrella; at the same time Europe itself seemed no longer the place of experience but of exposed innocence. For many young writers, the trip to America became an obligatory affair, a journey into the political and emotional realities of the postwar world. Cultural contacts increased with America, and diminished with Europe; Fulbright travel grants and cheap charter flights, the benisons of American wealth and of booming consumer economy, drew people across the water; American popular products and images penetrated Europe in large numbers. The idea of modern mass-democracy itself, in its non-totalitarian form, seemed identified with the United States, with its benefits and opportunities, though also its costs, especially, of course, those of conformity. A new mythology of the western quest began to shape; America contained many of the life-styles, forms, modern existential perceptions that Europeans needed. It also afforded a literary patronage and assistance that Europe could not. Not surprisingly, then, a new generation found itself very America-centric. And the fabulous appeal of the United States was renewed in many forms, associated less with conservatism than with liberation, less with Wall Street than Beale Street. There were many novels of voyage, about going and experiencing, sometimes staying, sometimes coming back.

In England, this consorted with a new conservatism in the English novel, a throwing off of Bloomsbury Francophilia; Kingsley Amis, inspecting Europe on his Somerset Maugham Travelling Award, found this expatriate model of the writer pretentious; he liked England best. America, though, had more allure; and the topic is treated in his *One Fat Englishman* (1963), where another English rogue-hero goes to the States in a mood both of curiosity and English superiority. The hero does not survive intact, however, as Waugh's does. He comes home again with his linguistic register intact, a triumph of sorts.

> "Fascinating to see the underlying assumptions and goals of a culture laid bare in its idiom [he is told]. Thus where an American typically says *I do this*, showing concern with an activity related to an object that is immediately present, an Englishman typically says *I have that*, showing concern with a condition that need be none of his making and is related to an object that may be at a distance and in the past."

The novel turns on such clever, comparative pairs. It is a text of uneasy patronage, filled with jokes about American packaging, advertising, speech, though also a veneration of American jazz. It is in the end a very ambiguous text, half patronising, half anxious, aware of the English

[8] I have discussed *The Loved One* and Waugh's image of America at much greater length in "America and the Comic Vision" in David Pryce-Jones, editor, *Evelyn Waugh and His World* (London, 1973).

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limitations. Amis's hero, a nasty man, has his victories over America. He steals a Swinburne notebook, on the grounds that it "demanded to be removed from American hands"; he goes home apparently successful. But throughout the book his European super-ego has been undermined by a Jewish id, and he does receive one of the most unpleasant verbal defeats in the history of fictional Anglo-American relations: "I sometimes get the impression that you think some of the people in this country don't like you because you're British", he is told. "That isn't so. . . . It isn't your nationality we don't like, it's you."

AMIS'S AMBIGUOUSLY POSITIONED book marks an interesting turning point in the sequence of European-American fictions. In it, America and the hero earn roughly equal satirical attention. But now a more favourable image of America was growing, in the days of the brain drain and the cult of mid-Atlantic man, when the boats were filled with writers travelling expectantly in both directions, from English to American campus, and vice versa. This fiction shows a marked change in the old Jamesian balance. Now it is English or European innocence, in the post-war historical situation, that is ready to meet American experience.

That theme runs, in various ways, through a good many English novels of the '60s, and something like a species seems to emerge. In Pamela Hansford Johnson's *Night and Silence, Who Is Here?* (1963), Wilfred Sheed's *A Middle Class Education* (1961), Anthony Bailey's *The Mother Tongue* (1963), Julian Mitchell's *As Far as You Can Go* (1963), Andrew Sinclair's *The Hallelujah Bum* (1963), my own *Stepping Westward* (1965), and Thomas Hinde's *High* (1968), versions of this American trip exist. The Englishman tends to be an innocent; the voyage goes naturally west, not just to the States, but then westward across the States, so that transcontinental travel is a key theme; the El Dorado is either the pristine American campus, or else the free, tribal, youthful community of an unconservative, undomestic, unEnglish world, a liberation beyond shame or guilt. It is even fascinatingly played backward into John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), set in Victorian England, where the central character undertakes an American voyage which leads him toward an image of his liberation ("At first, perhaps, he noticed a certain lack of the finer shades of irony. . . . But there were such compensations . . . a frankness, a directness of approach, a charming curiosity that accompanied the open hospitality; a naivety, perhaps, yet with a face that seemed delightfully fresh-complexioned after the faded

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culture of Europe. This face took, very soon, a distinctly female cast.").

It was an evolving image that compares interestingly with that of European writers, who had been compounding a stranger and in some ways bleaker version of the United States—from Kafka's *America* (1927), through Céline's *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (1932), to Michel Butor's *Mobile* (1962) and Alain Robbe-Grillet's *Projet pour une révolution à New York* (1970)—where decadent and apocalyptic fantasies are strong.[9] For most of these English novels offer a meaning for the American dream; it is the Europeans who are now more critical.

In my own *Stepping Westward*, James Walker, the ponderous, heavy hero, goes, by historic necessity, to be writer-on-campus in the town of Party; he is a not-too-angry young man seeking to transcend his too-cosy liberalism. The American characters compete to lead him to his liberation; a voyage across the States with an American existentialist girl-friend takes him close to his hoped-for reward. But he has brought his Englishness with him; existential releases are not easily gained by those of his nationality; he comes home again defeated, to British domesticity and stuffiness, the required English cold in his nose. He cannot defeat his own innocence, though he knows that he should.

In Thomas Hinde's *High* there is a similar trip towards liberation, towards redefinition by changed identity and new history. The highs are higher and the lows are lower, appropriate in a book published in 1968. Hinde also turns the fictional screw tighter by having a novel within a novel; the novelist Maurice Peterson is writing about another novelist, Peter Morrison, so that the process of mythicisation is itself dwelt upon (as in other ways it is in *Stepping Westward*). So where Peterson, seeking to purge less his innocence than his guilty Englishness, finds a student girl-friend and the pleasures of acid, Morrison, much more surrealistically, discovers a vastly more ambitious sexual partner and the kicks of heroin.

In both stories the retreat comes. The females retire into selfish sexuality; Peterson offers a classical English lesson ("The one thing they [fulfilment-seeking American women] can't allow is that the whole thing may be an illusion"), Morrison, reverting to an "old world, lousy with rural value judgments", commits murder and then suicide. Peterson's narrative thus ends in withdrawal, Morrison's in high romantic anguish; both, though, displace the "new American dream" of endless personal happiness, and represent it as psychic crisis.

IN BOTH BOOKS, though, one might see a growing element of pastiche; the mythic dimension is both invested in and mocked. James Walker knows he is the European innocent looking for European experience, a Jamesian character in reverse; Hinde, more massively, pluralises narrative registers, producing a form that is part-parody, part-pastiche, of other writers, of the myth itself. The moral and emotional anxieties cross over into formal ones, as they do in that classic among postwar versions of this story, Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955), where the love-hate affair is not only with American nymphet and American phenomena, but with American language as such. Nabokov's linguistic America has its affinities to Kafka's earlier tale, written without a visit to the United States; Nabokov, of course, did settle there for a time, but after writing earlier in Russian and German, so that he saw the formal and linguistic relativism of his subject. And it is this pastiche or mock-mythic element that has become a noticeable feature of the last phase of the story to date: the European novels about America in the 1970s.

Anthony Burgess is one writer who has been much preoccupied with the theme, most conspicuously in *The Clockwork Treatment: or Enderby's End* (1974). Here Enderby, the author-surrogate of two previous novels, turns up in the States to teach literature (as so often) and to face the reputation he has won as author of the screenplay of "The Wreck of the Deutschland." The perverse Catholic images he has indulged in the script invest the America he visits. America is violent, abrasive, a place of dangerous subways, lonely apartments, and of that punitive baiting of

[9] For a fascinating discussion of modern treatments of "the American dream" by recent English and European writers, including Kafka, Céline, Butor, Robbe-Grillet, Nabokov, etc., see John Fletcher, "Comparing the Literatures: Or, What Happens When the American Dream is Celebrated on Opposite Sides of the Fence", in *Comparative Literature Studies*, XIII, 2 (June 1976), pp. 116–131.

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the English most of these novels contain. It is almost entirely a pastiche America, a concordance of fictional images. Enderby, conservative, rich in prejudices, above all tired of sexuality, and ready for death, knows his part in the fictional chaos. America, in the end, gives Enderby his death: a gun assault by a lady admirer turns into a decadent sexual encounter, the only kind left to his European spirit. The result is his heart attack. His corpse lies on the bed at the end for historical inspection: a case.

Similar motifs, without the decadence, dominate David Lodge's *Changing Places* (1975). Lodge elaborates the myth further by having it work in both directions: from Rummidge to Euphoria, California, there goes an English realist, looking for more than he has, a renewal of old hints of liberation raised by a honeymoon visit there; from California to Rummidge there comes an American modernist, looking for less, a taste of ordinariness after the elaborations of his California marriage. The two tales parallel and parody each other (not unlike the way Nabokov, in *Ada*, makes his America totally fictional by making it a mock-Russia); each man takes over the other's office, his style, his wife, his life. It is, as the book says, "a duplex plot" with a very busy novelist behind it. The author accepts happy complicity in the fictional exchange programme; the jokes about parallel plots raise all the problems about modern style—about trying to write either a liberal-realistic novel about the "inviolate self", or a modernist or post-modernist fiction which discards realism for text or contingency. The realistic, empirical European fictional tradition thus meets the American experimental one; the result is not a post-modernist book but a comedy about the causes of post-modernism.

As for America, it neither wins nor loses, but enacts itself as a tempting, traditional, paradisial metaphor, in its modern form of sensual wonderland. Europe, in turn, enacts itself as a realistic state, a place where the liberations are faint, the heating doesn't work, wet rot, contingency and disorder prevail, and the sex has another function —"Hilary's orgasms (if such they were) were marked with nothing more dramatic than a hissing sigh, rather like the sound of air escaping from a Li-lo." The lesson seems to be that the best place for all concerned is somewhere halfway between Europe and America, preferably in a jet plane en route for the inevitable wonderland, Party or Euphoria, that has in the past had other forms—Statue of Liberty, open prairie, Edenic settlement, Whispering Glades cemetery with its snakeless pastoral—and which will doubtless have future ones, since it is, after all, the place that almost but never quite exists.

Mary Poppins & the Academics Who Ate Hollywood

Books on Film—By Alexander Walker

There aren't simply Two Cultures any longer. Now they are three. The humanist and the scientists have been infiltrated by the *cinéastes*. Time was when university professors simply went to "the pictures" to relax; and seeing one's tutor stretching his legs at *Duck Soup* or *Horse Feathers* was infinitely reassuring to those of us with unformed minds. Nowadays, as the outpourings of the campus presses constantly remind us, what used to be relaxation has become a fully-fledged discipline in its own right. Far from unhitching his mind with his gown and depositing both in the box-office, the don who takes cinema seriously now labours to cloak his enthusiasm with theories. Amongst the cinema books submitted to me for notice two are by lecturers in English, two by professors of history, and one is by a professor of dramatic arts.

They have quite a lot in common. Two of them indeed open with the self-same quotation: Abel Gance's 1926 pronouncement, "The time of the image has come." All of them write rather in the style of worker-priests, trying to reconcile the tasks of the cinema shop-floor with the demands of a higher academic calling. "I shall have much to say about *Kane* and Rosebud" is a simple, neutral remark. But in the context it assumes the premonitory ring of the lecture theatre: our pencils are poised to transcribe the "recommended reading" list, or, in this case, "recommended viewing."

There is still a residual surprise in seeing Pop fodder for movie-buffs being minced into slivers for the academic to chew on. *Top Hat* is a film that's under the care and protection of card-carrying romanticists as one of the most infectious

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and inventive ever made. But to the academic *cinéaste*, it's a particularly sound example of "information storage" (Fred's refusal to tell Ginger his name) as well as "celebration coalescence" (Fred and Ginger dancing cheek to cheek). Not, of course, that it is easy to introduce G. W. F. Hegel to D. W. Griffith with suitable nonchalance, or even to persuade Hobbes to lie down with Robert Aldrich. It's all too easy to fall into strained erudition or contagious vulgarity. After all, to ask why Piers Plowman is like *Pick-Up on South Street* is rather like echoing Lewis Carroll's celebrated riddle, "Why is a raven like a writing desk?" There's an answer somewhere, but one can slip a disc searching for it. Moreover, to define romanticism as "the visionary lyricism of *chutzpah*" may have a justifiable tie-in with Louis B. Mayer, or, better still, Harry Cohn, the unlamented boss of Columbia Pictures, whose movie-viewing was certainly *chutzpah* recollected in tranquillity—if, that is, the movie in question was deemed good enough to keep his ass still on the executive chair in the screening room. All the same, the phrase has the taint of *Variety* about it, not Academe: it is like defining *hubris* as, say, "the overreaching pride of a *schmuck*."

BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT that Professor McConnell's book,[1] from which most of the above examples come, is to be preferred to some of those of other academics. I feel a compatriot warmth towards a man, a Professor of English at Northwestern, who has clearly carried the workload that film critics have to bear. Most academics who turn *cinéastes* appear abashed about admitting they enjoy movies that are of later date than *Potemkin*. Not McConnell. Seeking examples of films that are virtually allegories of moviegoing and moviewatching, he seizes on a couple of titles that would draw a great WHEEEEEEEEE!!!!!! of bemused delight out of someone like Tom Wolfe —at least it would before the lava-flow of the New Journalism cooled down. These are *Mary Poppins* and *The Wizard of Oz*. After the obligatory cough of apology (". . . by no means a major film"), he examines the ambiguous power of celluloid to take our notion of the real world and restructure it into Joyce's version of "the reel world." (McConnell's own punning title is pure Joycean: well, *fairly* pure.)

Daniel J. Boorstin, of course, has been in these parts already, pointing out in *The Image* that the real Grand Canyon never looks as good as its Kodachrome reproduction. And McConnell quotes what the satanic Alex says about the blood in *A Clockwork Orange*, that it's never as real as when you "viddy" it on a cinema screen. Film in short is a controlled dream, akin to Adam's in *Paradise Lost*, from which, as Keats added, he awoke "and found it truth." McConnell comments: "If Keats's metaphor is a brilliant articulation of the ambitions of romantic writing, it is also an uncannily accurate version of our experience of the art of the film."

Well, yes and no. We certainly don't come out of *Mary Poppins* or *The Wizard of Oz* humming the metaphysics. Neither, I suggest, leaves us feeling there has been an interchange ("complex and potentially dangerous") between the visionary world in them and daily reality. But then we don't re-structure the real world any longer in such rose-tinted terms as Julie Andrews and Judy Garland.

McConnell treads surer ground if one considers a film like *Rollerball*, whose appeal is based on the notion of death as a distraction sport in which superstar athletes play game, set and massacre with each other in order alternately to lull and stimulate a captive audience. Is not the world we emerge into at the end of it very much like the metaphor of the movie? I think it is. The comment that films make on the psychic life of the times is now ruthlessly in tune with the times: the real world's escalation of violent events and sexual candour has simply meant more blood, longer moans on the screen. The "dream" becomes the "truth" all right, though nowadays it is more likely to be the truth of nightmare.

"FILM IS ALMOST TOO REAL", says McConnell, adding that "not by accident did Siegfried Kracauer entitle his important *Theory of Film: 'The Physical Redemption of Reality'*, in an attempt, something like infant baptism, to 'save' the hyper-reality he sees as the essence of filmic truth." The essence of this hasn't been diluted by events in the "reel" or the "real" world, though today we get to the same point on a less elevated plane, as McConnell's next sentence indicates, when he refers to the star of sexploitation "skin-flicks", Edy Williams, describing her forthcoming movie: "There'll be all sorts of frontal nudity and sex, and I'm going to make everyone in the audience *come*." There indeed we have the novice articulating the same phenomenological problem—film as *wet* dream, perhaps?—but such reference does dent the book's authority (which is still considerable) by using a fairly flighty quote as back-up material for its thesis. I fear that not even describing Ms Williams as "the former Mrs Russ Meyer" redeems *her* physical reality, or even confers academic respectability on Mr Meyer who directed *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* and is known as the former "King of the Nudies."

[1] *The Spoken Seen: Film and the Romantic Imagination*. By FRANK D. MCCONNELL. Johns Hopkins University Press, $11.95, £9.50, paper $2.95, £2.35.

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McConnell breathes more easily when he examines films as metaphors for the filmmaking process itself. In earlier ENCOUNTER notes,[2] I suggested, not entirely playfully, that *The Exorcist*, the occult horror film, could be taken as a metaphor for a screenwriter's *angst*, the fear that his precious child of a script will be possessed by all the demons that moviemaking is heir to. *The Spoken Seen* offers other stimulating examples of film commenting on its own dream process. To the list I should now like to add a comedy like Joseph L. Mankiewicz's 1967 film, *The Honey Pot*, an updating of *Volpone*, in which a wily charlatan, in many respects like a film producer since even his palazzo furniture turns out to be rented from Cinecitta, takes revenge on three women with strong resemblances to actresses whom Mr Mankiewicz once had to suffer. As a purgative for his experiences directing *Cleopatra*, *The Honey Pot* may not have quite taken: as a metaphorical comment on Hollywood, it is devastating.

To McConnell, the classic example of a film that is both dream and metaphor is *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, though he's wrong to assert that "few" films are ever conceived originally in terms of décor. Many musicals are—*The Red Shoes*, for example. But he wins his case by careful analysis and he could have extended it to embrace the curious reappearance of the Caligari theme in a literary work that cries out for filming. I mean Albert Speer's final volume of memoirs, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*.[3] If German cinema began in a lunatic asylum, then how appropriate that Speer's account of some of the "lunatics" loosed by the Hitler Dream should end their days in another kind of asylum. Speer's book, too, performs the Caligari trick of effacing the line between sanity and madness, real world and dream one, and throwing on to us the uncomfortable responsibility of feeling ourselves a part of someone else's dream.

FRITZ LANG, TOO, was a man whose cinema flourished on dreams and nightmare; and though the text is somewhat sparse, and the author proclaims her desire not to delve into Lang's life to any embarrassing extent, the ample illustrations that make up Lotte Eisner's biography[4] of the director, who died only last year, put scholarship in her debt. It should ideally be read inside the frame of her earlier study of German Expressionism, *The Haunted Screen* (1973). In Lang's movies, like his *Dr Mabuse* series, the dream figures walk through the romantic imagination with the disorienting choreography of the unhuman. Not by accident, McConnell's most interesting analysis is a parable-film of the 1950s "era of insecurity", *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. No wonder Adam, faced with the morphology of monsters from popular culture, woke up with a jerk.

THE VIEW OF THE MOVIES as a "waking dream" is one accepted also by Geoffrey Wagner, Professor of English and the Humanities at the City University of New York. His book goes well beyond the area of "literary adaptations" suggested by its title, *The Novel and the Cinema*.[5] The form of the novel, he asserts, is internal. One has to refer back to the printed page, and can therefore throw up defences against its subject matter. But the structure of the cinema liberates feelings, causing them to fly out and settle as clouds of fears and desires with a deep, immediate and often threatening intensity. Cinema encourages feedback—the instant replay of fictitious material that can modify apparent reality. Reality moreover is simply not desired, even if it is possible. As Von Sternberg said, "Verisimilitude, whatever its virtue, is in opposition to every approach to art." I have remarked elsewhere that had Dietrich appeared in the naked reality of the flesh, Von Sternberg, her cinematic mentor, would have *dressed* her in the seven veils until she was an unreal phantom. And McLuhan considers that we only accept a depiction of reality so long as it generates the stuff of fantasy.

Wagner's book suggests why so many screen adaptations of novels are doomed to fail. The cinema thrives on "illicit arousals." It taxes us "with imagistic disjunctions." It releases an imagistic feedback to the senses more potent than literary craftsmanship did in the first place, though probably less aesthetically satisfying. This helps to explain the paradox that bad novels frequently make better movies than good ones. It is a pity, therefore, that Wagner's studies mostly take in remarkably fine works of literature—*Wuthering Heights, Madame Bovary, Lord Jim, 1984*—that have, not surprisingly, made second-rate movies.

He is well up on production details, but slips into omission at times. For instance, while noting Anthony Burgess's annoyance at the American paperback edition of *A Clockwork Orange* including an unauthorised crib for the book's Nadsat slang, he fails to mention the more beneficial change that came from dropping from the same edition that entire debilitating last

[2] "Beyond the Excremental Cinema", ENCOUNTER, May 1974.
[3] See R's "Column", ENCOUNTER, November 1975.
[4] *Fritz Lang*. By LOTTE H. EISNER. Secker & Warburg, £9.75.
[5] *The Novel and the Cinema*. By GEOFFREY WAGNER. Yoseloff/Tantivy Press, £6.25; Farleigh Dickinson University Press, $15.00.

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chapter of the book in which Alex reforms himself. Kubrick was surprised to come on the missing chapter in another edition of the book well after he had begun preparations to film it: he excluded it, too. Wagner criticises Kubrick for revealing, "rather pointlessly", Alex's surname to be "Burgess" in a montage sequence of newspaper front pages. I must hasten to exonerate Kubrick and take the blame myself. I was assisting the director with this sequence and helped write the fictitious headlines, by-lines and opening paragraphs that flitted across the screen. How the name "Burgess" got into it, I cannot now pretend to know, though it is probably a slip connected with my knowledge of a certain tragic element of autobiography in Burgess's book. But obviously such an error is richly suggestive. What would scholarship do without it, and its ilk?

CONCERN WITH WHAT constitutes visible reality is a feature of much writing, academic and critically, on cinema today. It is a symptom of the way we live now, rather than the way we observe. We all seem to be part of a "happening" nowadays. Real-life characters people the pages of novels—Truman Capote's *Answered Prayers*, Kingsley Amis's *The Alteration*, Tom Tryon's *Crowned Heads*, just to name three examples of what in other times would have been *romans à clef*, before they threw legal caution and the *clef* away. Life in the 1970s is so much more melodramatic that fiction has to compensate by importing the dramatic coloration of life. Even newscasts on television are becoming part of entertainment, not information, with the presenters paid fees commensurate with their personality value as the conveyors of (generally bad) tidings. If the Greek messenger were alive today, he would be put on a par with a Hollywood star—and probably displace from the centre of the stage that secular eminence to whom he used to humbly spout the news. News has become show-business: the relaying of it has little to do with observable reality. As A. J. Liebling said, a battle never seems more real than when it evokes the memory of scenes from American war films. We authenticate a fact by relating it to fiction.

This is an aspect treated in an essay by Professor William Hughes in *The Historian and Film*, a collection of pieces of variable usefulness and quality about what film can add to history.[6] Some of the essays are practical guides to archive material; a few detail the ethical problems involved. Should a historian be simply a "kite mark" of quality when he undertakes to advise a telly producer, or the actual "keeper of the

[6] *The Historian and Film*. Edited by PAUL SMITH. Cambridge University Press, £4.95.

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conscience"? According to one contributor, Professor Donald Watt of the London School of Economics, the professional historian wants to win (or preserve) the esteem of his fellows, whereas the producer wants to win an audience. "Only reconcile", as so often today, replaces "Only connect" as the humanist's desirable goal.

PROFESSOR HUGHES, of Essex Community College, Baltimore, considers film a very fallible witness to reality. It is better at catching commonplace attitudes and extracting the essence of the times from them than it is at rising to the big occasion. As Professor Watt says, considerations of the concordat between Mussolini and the Vatican in the TV series on the Third Reich had to be badly skimped simply because Church and State were never in the same place at the same time as a movie camera. Newsreel has a bad history—factually as well as scholastically. Hughes quotes Oscar Levant's definition of the once-standard newsreel—"a series of catastrophes, ended by a fashion show." The Pathé company's multi-national set-up actually militated against any in-depth analysis of any country's national events—the "news" had to be meaningful (*i.e.* commercially profitable) in as many countries as possible. It's only recently, and significantly with the wider use of videotape, that the processes of "discussion" and "decision-making" have joined the hardy staples of "consequences" and "reactions" in the picture of the world that the news cameras present on the screen.

What's also gained ground is the view of documentary as something very different from John Grierson's old definition of it—"the creative treatment of reality." Nowadays it is more likely to be regarded as "the persuasive manipulation of opinion." A documentary, in the phrase of Dr Marc Ferro of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, another contributor to the book, has become "a documented point of view." As this is now so obviously true, it is surprising how little that is written about documentary films actually examines the temperament, background, ideology of their makers. The political make-up of Marcel Ophuls, for example, went largely ignored in the critical response to his recent film *The Memory of Justice*. Yet it coloured content to a disquieting degree.

Ostensibly concerned to examine the concept of justice as demonstrated at Nuremberg, Ophuls was actually bent on apportioning a culpability to the former prosecuting democracies for acts of war which he alleged were on a par with those committed by the Nazi defendants. Camera angles, close-ups, the director's own interrogation (edged with cynicism in some cases, softened into sympathy in others), even the creative use of sound like the camera cutting away from Lord Shawcross as he spoke in legalistic terms about the bombing of Dresden to focus imaginatively on the crackling logs in the cosy study fireplace, were all used to affect a viewer's responses to material that had a surface verisimilitude, but was in fact deeply subjective. The maxim that "the placement of the camera is a moral choice" is still valid in feature filmmaking: where "documentaries" are concerned, it is often today a "*political* and moral choice."

QUITE THE MOST READABLE among the books in this field of *trompe l'oeil* illustration, where reality yields the field to fiction, is Elizabeth Sussex's successful attempt to re-create the human side of the British documentary movement.[7] Her text edits first-hand personal interviews with 12 major names—among them Grierson, Auden, Anstey, Elton, Rotha, Wright and Cavalcanti—into a fluid, dramatic chronology filled with the vernacular expressions of partial triumphs, vain hopes and missed chances.

[7] *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary*. By ELIZABETH SUSSEX. University of California Press, £6.50, $11.95.

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"A lot of my coal owner friends will probably never speak to me again, but if it is true we must show it", said Lord Rank about one of his own organisation's *Modern Age* documentary shorts on nationalising the coal industry. A simpler man, a simpler age. How often nowadays, one wonders, does the phrase "Is it true?" enter into the filmmaker's lexicon? "Can it serve?" is a more likely reflex.

Documentary used to be about enquiry: nowadays, virtually all the ones that call attention to themselves are about protest. As Erik Barnouw's masterly distillation of the non-fiction film's history reminds us,[8] the divisive tensions of the world have recruited the documentary filmmaker as a serving soldier of ideology quite as much as the man in the field. We are in a "guerrilla-film era." Though the old artifice of "re-enactment" to provide events that inconveniently hadn't been filmed at the time may have died with *The March of Time*, or been absorbed into some of BBC TV's drama series, the slanted image amply replaces, and does so in a subtler form, the necessity of the invented action. "Truth" is not the only casualty here: the myths of fiction that have been used to structure truth are frequently the ones singled out for destruction. But what we do when we have no myths left by which to verify what we see is a problem that probably the humanist will have to answer rather than the *cinéaste*. Should the humanist survive, that is.

[8] *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film.* By ERIK BARNOUW. Oxford University Press, £5.65, $12.95; paper £2.50, $3.95.

The Human Zoo

On Harold Pinter—By BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

EVERY CRITIC OUGHT TO KEEP a copy of Frederick Crews's *Pooh Perplex* somewhere beside his typewriter, as a sort of pretension-repellent. It's a collection of essays with titles like "A. A. Milne's Honey-Balloon-Pit-Gun-Tail-Bathtub Complex" or "Poisoned Paradise: the Underside of Pooh." Harvey C. Window, Murphy A. Sweat, Duns C. Penwiper and the other contributors offer an infinity of insights into such key critical questions as the homoerotic implications of Tigger's habit of "bouncing", the status of Rabbit as an archetypal captain of industry and exploiter of labour, and the possibility that the whole bedtime *oeuvre* concerns "nothing less than the central drama of our faith: the Fall and Redemption of Man." Each case is painstakingly argued, and none of the regulation jargon is missing. "The Milnean voice in its didactic-paternal role", begins one learned scribe, "is unprepared simply to feed the self-love of the Christopheric ear. . . . "

The truth, as John Carey was arguing so eloquently in the *New Statesman* recently, is that the modern critic mistrusts and fears simplicity. That being so, the plays of Harold Pinter are a special torment to him. Can as little be going on as sometimes seems to be the case? If so, why do we leave the theatre feeling strangely satisfied? Some arcane trick must have been played on us, and it is (is it not?) our obligation to sleuth it out with the help of Jung, Frazer, R. D. Laing, Maimonides, St John of the Cross, or whatever helpmate happens to be nearest to our academic hearts. In order not to let myself off the hook, let me interject a personal story here. Years ago, I wrote a review accusing a play by Peter Terson of being "Pinteresque", by which I suppose I meant it was full of silences, vague menace, and sombre-seeming significance. Terson replied vigorously in print, declaring that he simply recorded speech he'd heard and characters he'd known, and was willing to bet that Pinter did the same. A few days later the great man obliged with a one-sentence letter, duly published in its entirety: "Peter Terson is dead right." Again and again he has made much the same point, and his only reward has been to be shrugged off as a coy tease, exciting his scholarly pursuers with a factitious modesty, a fake innocence.

At any rate, he has goaded many of them to a kind of literary rape. Austin E. Quigley's *The Pinter Problem*[1] spends half a page of its bibliography listing its subject's own work. Then follow eleven pages of critical books and articles, only, as it turns out, taking us up to 1971. "Pinter's *Slight Ache* as Ritual" is there, so is "The Dystopia of Harold Pinter", and so, come

[1] *The Pinter Problem.* By AUSTIN E. QUIGLEY. Princeton University Press, £7.90, $14.80.

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to that, is Arnold Hinchliffe's simply-titled *Harold Pinter*,[2] which has just been published in paperback and itself largely consists of a survey of Pinter studies. *The Birthday Party*, we learn, is about the IRA, Dionysus, the insecurities of Childhood, the violence of the totalitarian state, or Britain's colonial decline. *The Caretaker* involves the gods of the Old and New Testaments, bright and dark angels, the "system" and its victims, or (that eminent Shakespearian scholar, Wilson Knight, once again) the Dionysiac life-force, somewhat eccentrically reincarnated in the form of the old tramp, Davies. By the time we leave the firm of Quigley and Hinchliffe we would not be in the least surprised to be told that Sidcup itself was the Holy Grail.

Let me quickly add that neither of these books is at all bad. Indeed, the worst one can say about them is that they end far too soon, Hinchliffe with *The Homecoming*, Quigley with *Landscape* and *Silence*. *Old Times*, let alone *No Man's Land*, might not exist. Of the two, Hinchliffe's is the more elementary, an unpretentious and uncontroversial resumé of Pinter's career and achievements, suitable for sixth-formers or undergraduates. Quigley aims higher, advertising his book as a bold attempt to help Pinter criticism "out of the trough in which it has laboured for over a decade." What follows does not, I fear, quite justify his arrogance. There are even times when he seems to be rephrasing the self-evident in the style of Murphy A. Sweat or Harvey C. Window. When he tells us that "Aston presented Davies with problems because of his imperviousness to the coercion of interrelational dialogue", he only means that Aston bugs Davies because he won't be pushed around. On the other hand, those who manage to penetrate the stately jargon will find unusually close, accurate and sensitive readings of particular plays, notably *The Homecoming* and *The Caretaker*.

HERE, SURELY, IS THE first duty of Pinter's critics: simply to tell us what is going on. This is a more exacting business than it sounds, since the plays require, among other talents, a knack for impromptu translation. There are, of course, times when one scarcely needs a phrase-book to discover what the characters are really saying to one another. When the secretary in *Tea Party* crosses and recrosses her legs, as she describes to her new boss how her old one insisted on touching her, her intentions are pretty plain. But what are we to make of the apparent obsession with olives of the aggrieved husband of *The Collection*? Why does he repeatedly ask for them, and then, when his wife's supposed lover offers him some, brusquely turn them down? And why should Aston's brother, Mick, greet Davies with a long description of the bus services in East London?

Such minutiae cause great confusion among those tempted to see Pinter as the arch-allegorist. But their meaning should be fairly clear to anyone who has pondered Pinter's own story (told again in John Elsom's excellent *Post-War British Theatre*[3]) about how, as a Jewish boy in the East End, he avoided being beaten up by fascists. The trick was to keep walking, amiably saying "are you all right, then?" and "well, that's all right, then" to them as they stood under the bridge with their broken milk-bottles. Those seemingly irrelevant words were, in fact, a gesture of appeasement, submission, an indirect version of "you win." Similarly, the references to olives are expressions of (variously) hostility, indignation, self-pity and contempt, besides being attempts to disconcert and confuse others. And Mick bludgeons and befogs Davies with words, using every ploy he can to point out to him his ignorance and powerlessness, to make him tractable and malleable. He succeeds, too. Pinter's plays,

[2] *Harold Pinter*. By ARNOLD HINCHLIFFE. Macmillan Press, £2.50.
[3] *Post-War British Theatre*. By JOHN ELSOM. Routledge, £3.95.

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as he himself has insisted, are not about "the failure to communicate", that cliché of the contemporary theatre. His people usually communicate only too effectively, but what they communicate is something blunter and more basic than the words they actually use: "I hate you", "I want you", "do this", "give me that", "give me yourself."

An argument over a cheese roll in *The Homecoming* may be roughly translated as a do-or-die struggle for emotional supremacy. References to the movie *Odd Man Out*, in *Old Times*, become weapons in a conflict between two people determined to possess a third. And there is hardly a line in *The Caretaker* in which one of the three characters is not manipulating, being manipulated, or resisting being manipulated. Seen from this point of view, the play's pattern becomes apparent. The lonely Aston picks up a tramp, Davies, vaguely hoping to befriend him. Davies, who is actuated only by self-interest and the need to bolster his self-esteem, exploits the situation as far as his limited imagination will allow. Aston's brother, Mick, at first tries to frighten him off, and, when this fails, becomes subtler. He bamboozles Davies into an alliance with him, Mick. Davies sees no further use for Aston, insults him, and is rejected by him. So Davies has no friends left, a misfortune Mick at once makes brutally clear to him. The scheme has succeeded. We leave Davies isolated and helpless, the victim of his own stupidity and greed.

REDUCED TO THEIR ESSENTIALS, as they must be, most of Pinter's plays are indeed almost embarrassingly simple; and yet that is not the impression they give, either on page or stage. The manoeuvring that precedes and causes the basic transactions is often extremely elaborate, and always deftly, subtly observed. The characters' relationships, their status and power *vis-à-vis* one another, may shift from speech to speech, or even sentence to sentence. Pinter's plays demand extraordinary alertness from their audiences, and even that may not be sufficient. Some of the motives on display are clear enough: others are not. They have to be sniffed out, surmised, or simply guessed at, and, as in life, no firm or finite answer may emerge. "We're not quite sure of the author's intention here", Pinter remarked when he was directing his own *Lover*; and there is no reason to suppose him disingenuous. It has taken time for British dramatists to admit what British novelists came to understand 60 or 70 years ago, that an author isn't God and may not be able to explain his

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characters' every action. Indeed, Pinter's insistence on this is still very exceptional in that most backward of institutions, the British theatre.

The motives of most of the characters in *The Homecoming*, for instance, only gradually become evident and, as usual with Pinter, they turn out to be raw and amoral, more glandular than rational. Ronald Bryden, in his *Unfinished Hero*, aptly described the play in terms of the mating rituals of a group of fighting seals, "a zoo story in human dress." It is, we may agree, a prolonged tussle for status, sex and territory, at times requiring the skills of a Konrad Lorenz to unravel, so thick and distracting is that "human dress", that propensity for incongruous backchat. By the end an observant ethologist will have built up a formidable dossier, enough for several seminars on animal behaviour in North London; but, and this is my point, there will still be room for disagreement and debate. We're never quite sure why Teddy submits when his appalling family decides to put his wife "on the game", though there are plenty of hints to spur on scientific speculation. Ruth's own reasons for acquiescing in their sexual plans clearly include a craving for power, a distaste for a sterile marriage, an itch to "be dirtied" by life—and yet something still remains uncertain and perhaps unknowable, doomed to elude our prying noses. Pinter has a respect for his people's privacy: he always sets bounds to our, and probably his own, understanding of them.

Would it help to imagine *The Bacchae* as it might be rewritten by Marguerite Duras? No, I can think of no comparison that catches Pinter's unique blend of resonance and simplicity, obliquity and directness, civilised speech and brutish meaning. The result is a drama at once so forceful in its representation of human conflict, and so suggestive and tantalising in its interpretation of human beings, that those who ransack it for symbols or pound it into allegorical shapes seem positively ungrateful. Isn't the achievement enough in itself? If we must extract general meanings from Pinter's work, we can do little better than invoke his own remark, that it concerns "the weasel in the cocktail cabinet." He has, it's true, since withdrawn this uncharacteristic self-revelation, explaining that it was tossed out thoughtlessly in answer to a sudden, unexpected question; but I'm afraid that post-Freudian critics, familiar with the weight psychiatrists give to free-association, aren't to be fobbed off as easily as that. Pinter's plays are about weasels in cocktail cabinets, ids in aspic, or, to put it more locally, that peculiarly English savagery that cannot express itself openly and explicitly. Anyone who has observed the sly violence of which many of us become capable once we mask ourselves behind the windscreen of a car will readily recognise the truth of Pinter. And so will anyone, of whatever nationality, who has felt got at, threatened, manipulated, or humiliated without quite knowing how or why. Pinter's advice to the world may be simply summarised: be watchful.

IT'S A PITY we have heard so little from him recently. Since *Old Times*, in 1971, he has offered us only *No Man's Land*, which, in spite of some splendidly idiosyncratic passages, suffered from excess of haze and lack of conflict, too much mystery and too little matter. This was, perhaps, Pinter being Pinteresque, recycling his mannerisms rather than expanding his interests; and we can only hope that this, combined with the time he is presently giving to other men's work, doesn't betoken some Shakespearian withdrawal to his own private Stratford. Anyone who wishes to confirm how able and effective an adaptor he is should look at his *Five Screenplays*,[4] especially those for *The Go-Between*, *Accident* and *The Servant*. Anyone who has yet to recognise his canny skill as a director should catch up with *Otherwise Engaged*, still in London. But it is the man's own voice we really want to hear. We needn't go along with the over-exuberant critic who argued that *The Homecoming* was about a blocked, misunderstood writer, with Teddy standing for Pinter himself, Ruth representing his work, and Teddy's family the theatregoing public; but we can at least repeat the last words Teddy hears as he slinks offstage, leaving his wife behind—"don't become a stranger."

[4] *Five Screenplays*. By HAROLD PINTER. Eyre Methuen, £2.75.

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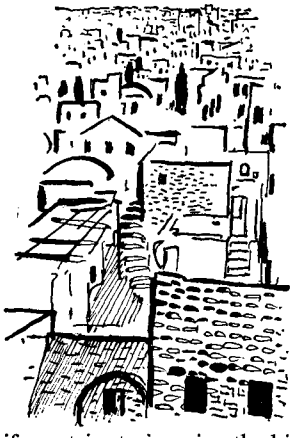
POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Turkey's Search for Identity

Kemal Atatürk's Heritage

By Arnold Hottinger



MODERNISATION in Turkey—or "westernisation"—took a special course, quite different from that followed by any other Muslim peoples in the Middle East the Arabs, say, or the Persians; and the difference is indissolubly linked with the personality of Atatürk. This can be seen most plainly if one tries to imagine the history of Turkey since the first World War without him.

It would have begun with the division of Turkey into zones: a French zone in the south and east; perhaps Kurdish and Armenian zones in the east; an international, and later perhaps a British zone on the Straits, including Istanbul; a Greek zone in the north-west, including Izmir; and a Russian zone in the north-east, including Kars and Ardahan. A small and hardly viable residue, Anatolia, would have remained in the middle. And what would the subsequent history of Turkey have been?

For the answer one need only look at what happened in the Arab and the Balkan worlds—a mounting resentment against colonialism and a burgeoning of terrorist and counter-terrorist movements. There would probably have been no division into separate different national states (because in the case of Turkey there are no natural, geographical, culturally confirmed frontiers such as we see in the Arab world in the great river valleys of the Nile and Mesopotamia). Instead there would probably have been a continuing bloody struggle between the various parts, inflamed by antagonisms encouraged among them by foreign occupation powers as well as between Turkish nationalists and foreign colonialists from Western Europe. Most probably the final phase would have resembled developments in the Balkans. Accumulated resentment against the colonialists would have driven the country into the Russian sphere of influence in the Second World War, and it would have ended as one (or perhaps even more than one) Soviet satellite state.

BUT ATATÜRK PREVENTED THAT. After the First World War he founded a successful nationalist movement that led to a war of national liberation against the Greek expeditionary forces. He and his colleague Inönü won the decisive battles of Inönü and the Sakaria River that drove the Greeks out of the country; they negotiated a new peace treaty with the European powers that preserved the Turkish national boundaries, and thus enabled the carrying-out of the country's modernisation in a framework different from that which prevailed elsewhere in the Near East.

Of So-called "Westernisation"

THE SITUATION was more complicated in Egypt, Syria, Iraq and even Lebanon. There social and economic "Westernisation" had to go hand in hand with a struggle against the colonisers. In Cairo, in the 1960s under Nasser, the statue of the converted French officer Suleiman Pasha (who had trained and commanded the army of Muhammed Ali) was replaced by that of Talaat Harb (the Egyptian Copt who had recognised the necessity of replacing foreign by Egyptian banks if the country were ever to be independent . . . he was the founder of what later became the National Bank of Egypt). Both the dethroned *pasha* of French origin and the national-capitalist from the Coptic minority whose statue now dominates the square were instruments of the Westernisation that was necessary if the nation's cause were to be able to stand up in the future against the pressure of the colonial powers, "against their greed", as Afghani had once put it. The difficulty for the countries subject to an army of occupation was that, if they hoped ever to get rid of them, they were forced to a greater or lesser extent—and to a greater extent the longer they remained—to

ARNOLD HOTTINGER, *a distinguished Swiss foreign correspondent, has travelled widely in Turkey and the Middle East. He is at present writing for the Neue Zürcher Zeitung from Madrid, and his article on "Two Spains, Two Histories" appeared in the June* 1976 ENCOUNTER.

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adapt themselves to the hated occupation officials, copy their methods, go to school with them, cooperate with them. This adaptation seemed to be, and actually was, at the very least, a partial surrender of their own traditions and cultural and civilisational individuality, and an at least partial "going over to the side of the colonial enemy." One had to become like the enemy one wanted to fight. The Arab states have not yet completely freed themselves of the inner contradiction inherent in that situation.

AS THE PROCESS OF LIBERATION advanced from the colonial phase to its post-colonial climax the contradiction became more and more acute. In the early stages it was merely a matter of taking over certain organisational details, primarily in military matters. In other respects one could remain oneself and cling to one's own traditions. At this stage it was still possible to accept a Frenchman—converted to Islam, it is true—as an instructor and to honour him as a great servant of the state. But the more one learnt from the colonialists, the harder it became to tolerate them. This was not just the result of being increasingly able to do the administrative and commercial work that they did and take over the advantages and privileges that went with it. It was also connected with the fact that the Arab countries "Westernised" themselves in layers. The chief instruments of this process were the various "Western-style" schools and technical colleges that were introduced while "Eastern-style" educational and training establishments (Azhar, Najaf, Kerbela, Zaitouniya, Qarawiyyin, as well as many other less well-known Muslim institutions in all large Arab cities) survived. There were, thus, two *élites*; a "modern" one that had partly shaken off its own traditions but was pregnant with the future, since in the years ahead positions of power, earning opportunities, and "rich living" in the Western style would inevitably accrue to it; and a traditional, impoverished Islamic one, lacking in any great future prospects but with deep roots in the country and, therefore, still greatly honoured. The only common denominator able for a time to unite the divergent *élites* was struggle against the colonial rulers. This struggle developed its own ideology—which could not be that of traditional Islam, because it also had to embrace the "Westernised" upper class—and this ideology was nationalism.

NATIONALISM is one of those blanket terms that can be applied to very different realities. There is a marked difference between the nationalism that arises from confrontation with a colonial occupying power and that of a country that has never experienced full colonisation. Colonisation leaves behind a trauma that at best can be eliminated only slowly. In retrospect Abdel Nasser's nationalism and aggressive pan-Arabism (the Arabs call it "Arab nationalism") can be regarded as a typical example of this kind of anti-colonial nationalism. The fact that in Nasser's time the colonialists had, to a large extent, already left Egypt and that Nasser himself brought about the departure of the remnants of colonialism from the Suez zone (in the negotiations of 1954) did not prevent its ghost from living on. Colonialism ("*al-Istimâr*") was for many years the chief Egyptian propaganda target and the chief target behind its secret military support (for Algeria, Aden, the Palestinians). All Egyptians and actually a large proportion of all the Arab peoples communicated *via* "Anti-Colonialism." In the course of ideological development under Marxist influence, the word "colonialism" has been replaced by "imperialism." The anti-imperialism directed against the United States and the members of NATO is no longer official doctrine in Sadat's Egypt, but remains influential in several states in the Arab world; and it can be regarded as the dominant ideology in student circles. At any rate in the Arab world it is the old anti-colonial feelings that lie behind it and give it its still very real resonance.

A Turkish Position of Strength

BY THEIR VICTORY in the war of national liberation Turkey and Atatürk himself were spared all this. Atatürk could set about his work of modernising the country on an entirely different basis. His point of departure was pride in a victorious war and the pride in being Turkish. His well-known saying that "There is only one civilisation" (by which he meant the European West) was possible only in that special context, and it was thanks to it alone that he was able to act as he did. If, like his Arab neighbours and his subsequent Persian allies (who had not been directly colonised but could not look back on any military victories over "colonialism"), he had had to direct his call for Modernisation at a people living under colonial pressures he would hardly have been able to summon them to do what amounted to no less than discarding their previous culture as useless and obsolete and learning to take over another one from abroad.

Atatürk's celebrated reforms are well known: Latin alphabet, European headgear and all the rest. But the real significance of what he did lay in the systematic diminution of the religion of Islam that until his time had been so closely bound up with Turkish public and private life.

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Both alphabet and clothing (particularly the headgear) had been symbols of Muslim values: the alphabet was that of the Koran and the Arabic tongue, and the headgear was a Muslim symbol because a hat with a brim cannot be used in prayer. Atatürk's reforms, directed by his gifted strategic sense, both military and political,[1] were directed against Islam, as the state religion ultimate legitimisation of all state activity and even of life itself. He saw that if he were to bring about basic changes in Turkey and the Turks he must attack Islam, the centre of their culture, the heart of their public and private life by which all their behaviour was determined. The previous history of Turkish attempts at reform, which had begun shortly after the French Revolution and had involved wider and wider circles until Atatürk's time, showed that they had always been frustrated by the religious element. But even more important was Atatürk's more or less instinctive understanding of his contemporaries.

[1] One should note that shortly before his death in 1938 he predicted with astonishing accuracy the broad course taken by the Second World War.

"Whatever Happened to Cleaver?" *

New York City

BAYARD RUSTIN, *the influential black intellectual social democrat, has written to his brothers in the press asking, "Whatever happened to Eldridge Cleaver?" Rustin is distressed that Cleaver is out, or substantially so, of the public view—precisely at a moment when he should be receiving maximum attention.*

> *"The handling of his case by the media has at times seemed a conspiracy not to treat Cleaver with the seriousness he warrants."*

It isn't true, of course, that the basic Cleaver story is unknown. Eldridge Cleaver was the godfather of the Black Panther organisation, the acme of whose theatrical life was reached when Robert Kennedy was killed and the Black Panther newspaper published a picture of him lying in his blood, over the caption, "DEATH FOR ANOTHER PIG."

ITS THREE PRINCIPAL FIGURES *were Bobby Seale, who beat a murder rap in Connecticut; Huey Newton, who was freed of one murder rap and is wanted now for another murder—and Eldridge Cleaver, who began his career by doing time for rape and robbery, got out on bail, involved himself in a shoot-out in which his companion was killed; then jumped bail and went to the free world to escape further persecution by the pigs.*

His free world began in Cuba where, after a few months, he noticed that in the discrimination-free land of Cuba, all the generals were white, and all the privates were black. He went on, like Candide, to Algeria this time, where he was received as a hero, and treated like a prisoner.

After a few years, he idled over to Paris. In France he was free, but after a while perspective set in and one day he arrived back in the US and turned himself in. He was handled by California authorities as a hot potato, but after six months he got bail, and began to address the American public about his career. It is here that his story starts, the story that moves Bayard Rustin—and me.

AS A YOUNG MAN, *Cleaver began as a desperado of sorts, but soon his antinomianism was ideologised. He then consecrated his violence to the ideals of a Marxist revolution. He wrote a searing book of hatred called* Soul on Ice, *and hung out his shingle at* Ramparts *Magazine, where he zestfully contributed to a new American foreign policy which consisted of denouncing the CIA for violence, and a democratic policy teaching the virtues of violence.*

All that Eldridge Cleaver put behind him when he arrived back in the US. And he was to face the bitterest experience of all.

When Cleaver was strutting about the US denouncing it, he was never without friends, supporters, and a gallery. Now that he is back, sharing his experiences in that totalitarian world which he had thought of as free, he is greeted with sullenness by many student bodies and with forthright hostility by students who cannot bear to hear the former leader of the Black Panthers praise American institutions, and denounce the totalitarian ways of much of the Third World. At Northwestern, he was booed when he criticised Castro's Cuba—by students who never lived in Castro's Cuba.

RUSTIN REMINDS US *that*

> *"the white Radical Chic is no longer interested in cocktail parties for black radicals, especially ones like Cleaver who no longer satisfy their voyeuristic interest in revolution."*

He goes on to say:

> *"And conservatives, of course, are no more interested in helping Cleaver the democratic reformer than they were in helping Cleaver the revolutionary."*

That statement is a little confusing. Conservatives have every reason to rejoice in the education of Cleaver, and in the courage he has shown by renouncing his own past. It is hardly our duty to press upon the country Cleaver's suggested domestic reforms, except insofar as they are desirable.

But Cleaver's integrity is a matter for national celebration, toward which I light this candle.

William F. Buckley jr.
in the NEW YORK POST

* See "Eldridge Cleaver: Views in Prison" (ENCOUNTER, May 1976).

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He saw plainly that "Islam" as it had hitherto been regarded in the Islamic world was irreconcilable with the "civilisation" that he wanted to see taking root in Turkey. Islam had to surrender the privileged position it had hitherto enjoyed. The Caliphate must be abolished, and schools and universities were to be laicised; at the village level the schoolmasters' influence must be set against that of the traditional *hodja*; European legal codes must be introduced, including European marriage and family law which clashed with Islamic law in so many respects. These were the instruments he used to "laicise"[2] the state. There were also other minor, almost petty, measures (*e.g.* the ban on the call to prayer being sung from the minarets in Arabic).

All the reliable biographies make it clear that Atatürk persecuted Islam with a personal passion and sought to eliminate it with a zeal that betrayed a deep animus. It was his enemy, because he recognised it as lying at the heart of the Turkish mentality that he wanted so much to change. He himself drank, and encouraged the consumption of alcohol because it is forbidden to Muslims. For much the same reason he visited European-style cabarets at which lightly-dressed ladies appeared; and he saw to it that pictures of these ladies were reproduced in the public press.[3]

NO OTHER MUSLIM RULER went so far as Atatürk. Reza Shah modernised Persia and promoted a Persian nationalism that tried to base itself on the Persian historical tradition. But he kept as one of the pillars of the state the Shi'ite variety of Islam that had been closely associated with his country since the time of the Safavid dynasty.

During the struggles for liberation in the Arab world nationalism has been reinforced by Islam. The colonialists were, after all, unbelievers. Only at a later stage and in a few individual cases have there been clashes between the régime and the religious power, and these have generally been limited to definite conflicts between religious institutions, generally of a conservative kind, and definite revolutionary nationalist governments—*e.g.* Abdel Nasser's persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood after the attempt to assassinate him, or the clashes between conservative Islam and the Syrian Ba'athists that several times led to attempted risings in the town of Hama and the bazaar in Damascus.

But if one asks, in retrospect, how far Atatürk's secularisation campaign succeeded, the answer must be carefully qualified. There is no doubt that he succeeded in creating a bourgeois *élite* on whom the state structure depends, and that its mentality was determined not so much by Islam as by the Turkish nationalism of which loyalty to Atatürk and his ideals were a part. But it is also evident that today, almost forty years after the great statesman's death, Islam is gaining ground again in Turkey. How is this to be explained?

It is certainly connected with the fact that the social stratum on which the state under Atatürk depended was a relatively narrow one (officials and governmental economic managers), and that its members grew comfortable and self-satisfied in the long period of their exercise of absolute power. This old *élite* has, at any rate, in part been overtaken and succeeded by a different set of people whose mentality was formed less by Atatürk than by the traditional, still Muslim and feudal style of life of the Turkish villages and landowners. When the ballot-boxes really came into their own after the Second World War, they opened the way again for Islamic traditions in Turkey. Appealing to Muslim traditions provided (and still provides) a way to electoral success for the politicians of the Right, and they have not hesitated to use it. But they have to do so with a certain amount of caution, because since Atatürk the "lay" principles of the Turkish state have been anchored in the constitution, and the military see to it that they are abided by. Appealing to religion for political purposes is forbidden, though the ban is not always easy to impose and has been applied with varying degrees of strictness by different governments.

But one thing is clear: the appeal is successful because the Islamic religious tradition has indeed survived among the people. There are many signs of this. For example, I found that, in the peasant villages of Central Anatolia, Muslim law relating to polygamy and the specifically Muslim law of inheritance in practice are operative in spite of the theoretical validity of the "European" law in these matters. The children of several wives are often ascribed to one of them to prevent them from being illegitimate in the eyes of the state. Are these extreme cases? But there are many signs of a certain nostalgia for the Islamic tradition that was broken—almost violently—under Atatürk. Pilgrims to Mecca increase in numbers; many people, especially the ordinary simple folk, seek religious instruction for their children, and election promises that this will be provided are frequent, obviously because they are attractive.

[2] The word "*laic*" was taken over into Turkish.

[3] Once, when Atatürk was drunk and was disturbed by a call to prayer from a minaret, he gave orders that the minaret was to be demolished. The order was not carried out. The next day the Turkish President instructed his staff that all orders he gave while under the influence of alcohol were not to be carried out immediately, but were to be resubmitted to him for confirmation next day. If the anecdote reveals his animosity to Islam, it also indicates the self-control that he was normally able to maintain.

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Arabic lettering rouse lively interest whenever it appears, even though people are unable to read it. The reason why interest in Turkish folklore and the country's past history is so widespread and so pronounced is that they combine the two "hostile" ideologies of Atatürk's time, Nationalism and Islam. Turkish popular art in all its manifestations is, of course, eminently Islamic.

The Cultural Vacuum

THE ISLAMIC REVIVAL can also be explained in another way. Only a small ruling class, the bourgeoisie and the officials in the towns (Ankara and Istanbul in particular), the caste on which the state structure depended, were able to acquire a more or less complete education in the field of "the only civilisation" that Atatürk was willing to acknowledge, that is, the European West. The great mass of the people, particularly in the villages, had to be satisfied with a superficial acquaintance with the new way of printing and writing; and, after their brief schooling was over, they at most had newspapers to read, and often not even that. Their traditional culture was restricted by the fact that the state was at pains to cut back its Muslim foundation—by training no more *hodjas*, for instance, and closing the religious institutions that had previously provided schooling. The popular mystical groups and orders that had been an important expression of the traditional culture and way of life were forbidden. The inevitable result was a certain cultural vacuum, particularly for the lower levels of the population, accompanied by a latent need to fill it. But to be filled with what? For the village peasants in Central Anatolia there was "one civilisation" only, though it was not the Europeanism that Atatürk meant, for the Western civilisation had hardly affected them. To them civilisation was Islam; and as soon as democracy was given freer play—and they were actually asked for their opinion—they did not fail to let it be known that they wanted a certain activation of traditional Muslim religious and cultural life.

THERE ARE AT PRESENT POLITICIANS who publicly advocate this—they are to be found chiefly among the parties of the Right and especially, of course, among the distinctive Islamic groupings (*Erbakan's*, the National Salvation Party, is now a member of the coalition). They contend that in Europe there is a vigorous religious life in spite of the separation of Church and State, and why should not the same situation obtain in Turkey? Nowadays, many of them add, the Muslim religion can in no way represent a basic threat for the modernity of the state structure is assured. Nobody is secretly plotting to bring back the Caliphs. Atatürk had to deal severely with religion, because in his time the reactionary forces and their allies represented a real threat to national reform; but today the state should be neutral and allow people freedom of religion.

When one first hears these arguments, they seem convincing enough. But on closer inspection, as I found, they turn out to be rather superficial. In the first place, Islam does not have the tradition and theory of the separation of Church and State ("Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; but unto God. . . .") that developed in the Christian West (though much less strongly in Byzantium). On the contrary, it calls unequivocally for their combination, for a theocratic terrestrial state under the leadership of the successors to the Prophet (*i.e.* the Caliphs). Also—and this is surely of greater practical importance at the present time—Atatürk certainly had more in mind in suppressing the Islamic tradition than merely depriving Islamic institutions of their worldly power. He defeated Islam when he deposed the Caliph; but his objective was a change in Turkish mentality. He wanted the Turks to turn to the modern western world, and Islam was an obstacle to this. The central issue of Turkish contemporary politics is this question of mind and spirit, the extent to which it has in fact changed, the extent to which the old mentality survives, and the developments pointing to the future that are taking place in both the old and the new.

ATATÜRK'S most long-lasting influence has been on the Turkish Army. Its officers are trained in his spirit, and his heritage provides them with a kind of guideline to follow through the complicated labyrinth of Turkish politics. The Army has intervened twice to stop developments it regarded as "a betrayal" of the heritage. In 1960 it overthrew the ruling Democratic Party and later put its leaders on trial for having gone too far in appealing to the Islamic instincts of the villagers and also for trying to monopolise governmental power with the aid of the ballot-box. It intervened again in 1971; this time it was extreme left-wing groups that seemed to be threatening the state by their guerrilla tactics. In 1960, the Army's reply to the political monopolists was a far-reaching liberalisation of the régime to secure the democratic system. The result was a constitution primarily intended to prevent a majority party from again trying to arrogate the media and the whole governmental structure to itself. The consequence of the second intervention was severe persecution of the whole of the Left, both that part of it involved

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in guerrilla activities and others as well, involving all sorts of maltreatment and arbitrary imprisonment. After 1971 the very liberal constitution was modified so that the state could cope with revolutionary challenges.

During both these periods the cohesion of the Army was not easily preserved. During the revolutionary 1960s radical officers unsuccessfully attempted *coups* that would have ended, not in returning power to the democratic parties, but in a military dictatorship. The 1971 intervention seems to have started because senior officers feared a *putsch* by their juniors that would also have led to a long-lasting military dictatorship. There were also military schools that were said to be "riddled with leftism" and whose cadets had to be dismissed. But in both periods the Army was able to resist such schismatic trends and to act essentially as a united body under the leadership of its senior officers. The Atatürk ideal was the guideline on which all leading military and civil groups were able to unite.

In the civilian field the dissolution of Atatürk's heritages is more advanced. Every politician and writer appeals to his authority, though there are a large number of different interpretations of what constitutes his "true spirit" and what his attitude might conceivably be in present-day circumstances. One of the politicians who can claim with some justification to have adapted "the Atatürk tradition" to the existing situation in Turkey and the world is Bülent Ecevit, the leader of Atatürk's old party, the Republican Popular Party (CHP). He stands for a social democratic régime; and he can indeed with some credibility claim that such a régime would most effectively "help Turkey along the road to Europe on which Atatürk set it. . . ."

At the last elections in 1974, however, the Social Democrats failed to secure an absolute majority. They could govern only in a coalition. But all the other political groups were to their Right and appealed with various degrees of openness and directness to tradition and with it to the Islamic forces that enabled them to mobilise the votes of the traditionally-minded peasants. These groups enjoy a majority, though for many years they were in violent competition; and after a great deal of tactical manoeuvring they united to form a government with Ecevit in opposition. But Ecevit hopes to secure an absolute majority at the next election, and can claim that the modernisation of economic and social life is working on his behalf. Most of his votes come from the industrialised parts of the country. The "changed mentality" that Atatürk brought about among the ruling class of his time now faces the challenge of the polls. If Ecevit with his renewed Popular Party succeeds in obtaining an absolute majority, he will be able to claim that not just an *élite*, but a majority of the Turkish people has entered on the path to modernity and to participation in Europe's Western heritage.

On the Extremes

YET AT THE SAME TIME there have also appeared in Turkey, particularly at the universities, groupings of the extreme Right and Left of the type that are to be found in the Arab Near East and certainly would be found in Iran if they were not ruthlessly suppressed there by the *Savak* secret police. Hardly a week passes without violent and often bloody strife between Right and Left extremists at Turkish universities. Here we have two groups of young people who do not accept the Turkish state as it is (*i.e.* Ecevit in political competition with Demirel). The Right consists either of Muslim groups whose objective is an ideal Muslim state, or of pan-Turks who want to turn Turkish nationalism into a master-race ideology that could promise the salvation of the world. At the other extreme are the Marxists, few of whom are Communists loyal to the party line (though these are banned and their political leaders have been imprisoned since 1971); more often they belong to "anti-Imperialist groups", and a new world "without exploitation" (especially by the Americans) is their dream.

THIS PHENOMENON of an extreme Islamic Right confronted by an extreme Left of revolutionary-minded intellectuals, particularly among students, exists in practically all the Islamic countries. Its origins lie in an acute sense of discomfort with the "Western bourgeois-capitalist régimes" that to a large extent have been adopted by the Islamic states. There have been direct contacts between the Turkish Left and revolutionary Palestinian groups, particularly Dr George Habash's Popular Front and Nayef Hawatme's Popular Democratic Front, in whose camps Turkish guerrillas have been trained. Among the Islamic groups international ties are generally weaker, though there is undoubtedly a family resemblance between movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood, the corresponding Turkish groups, the Mawdoodi movement in Pakistan, etc. This can be attributed to the fact that all these groups that pursue an exclusively Islamic policy aim at establishing a state power interpreted according to basic Islamic doctrine. They want something radically different from what is offered them by present-day modernising states, whether they are democracies like Turkey or

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military dictatorships like most of the other Muslim régimes.

The left-wing groups can of course be compared with the Left protest groups that exist among youthful intellectuals all over the world. But this has led in Turkey to attempts to start urban guerrilla movements and to the foundation of an "*Army for the Liberation of the Turkish Peoples.*"[4] The simplest explanation is surely that the nationalism of the Atatürk epoch—which at the time bore definite marks of an *ersatz*-religion (on an emotional level it took the place of a suppressed religion)—ceased to satisfy Turkish intellectuals. They found it increasingly inadequate, hollow, empty. For it ultimately led merely to a society that, to their ideologised minds, was under the domination of the Americans and "late-capitalist imperialism." They set out on a kind of *jehad*, a revolutionary holy war and, though their activity was rationalised and legitimised by Leninist theories, I feel that their true motivation derived from the cultural vacuum I have described above which had become the destiny of the great majority of the Turkish people. The guerrillas obtain many of their recruits from the Anatolian hinterland (in particular among students, significantly of both sexes) who have gone to live in the big cities. I am convinced that the reasons for joining the pan-Turkish radical nationalists ("Fascists" in the terminology of their enemies) and the Muslim activist groups are the same.

The "cultural vacuum" is not unique. It certainly also exists in other Muslim states. But in these it was not the result of a deliberate anti-Islamic policy. On the contrary, it is partly covered over and concealed by the continued existence of Islamic forms and usages; nevertheless it exists. It is, I think, attributable to the fact that the rapidly advancing modernisation of the whole of life inevitably leads to the suppression of Islamic ways and religious practices, whether this is desired or not. An often very superficial rationalism and materialism become widespread. These lead to the appearance of emotional needs that can be filled by radical political movements, such as Nationalism, Left-wing militance, Islamic activism.

Could it be that Turkey is now becoming more and more part of that Middle East of Islamic peoples from whose path Atatürk wanted so desperately to divert them? The Turks and their Arab and Persian neighbours are indeed faced with similar problems. These arise from the irresistible and inevitable replacement of Islamic culture by an imitated Western culture, with the accompanying appearance of deep unsatisfied needs. Fifty years after Atatürk's reforms it seems no longer to make a great deal of difference whether the impulse to Modernisation and Westernisation came from a thoroughly clear-sighted great man who deliberately swept aside the Islamic obstacles in his way, as in the case of Turkey—or whether an inevitable path is being taken under the pressure of circumstances, without any clear awareness of where it leads, glossing over the situation with genuflections of respect for the Islamic tradition. Do not the end-results seem to be the same?

BUT APPEARANCES ARE DECEPTIVE. Atatürk's tradition is still the central tradition of the Turks, even though exuberant Islamic and post-Islamic growths now threaten and hem it in on both sides. The Turkish Army has upheld the Atatürk tradition, in contrast to most of the Arab militarists, who have felt obliged to take over power themselves because they thought "the politicians were making too much of a mess of politics." In most cases it turned out that the Army officers were not, as they so naïvely supposed, any better at politics than the old politicians.

Atatürk's historic party has actually succeeded in renewing itself and seems today to have found a path that—with the necessary adjustments for the times—promises to continue on that which Atatürk set out. At all events it emerged from the 1974 elections as the country's largest party. Atatürk opened up a wedge-shaped path of *bon sens* and even cool reason through the thick forest of Turkish politics. In the time of the Father of modern Turkey the end of the wedge was so wide that it seemed at first to be clearing the whole of the thicket. In the course of the decades that followed his death the broad path narrowed, and trees and undergrowth grew tall on both sides. But the general direction of the path remains, and one can advance along it. Its existing length and breadth provide an historic sense of direction such as the other Muslim states, having entered the wood by chance paths, do not possess. The other Muslim states are caught in this forest with all its tangled undergrowth because they must modernise; for if they fail to do so they will perish, for power reasons alone; and they are consequently faced with the risk of losing themselves or losing the way. The path that Atatürk laid out aimed at finding a way through that forest in the direction of the European West, and the ideal of "the only civilisation" still beckons.

[4] The term "Peoples" in the plural was especially resented by Army officers and was regarded by them as a betrayal of "Atatürk's heritage", and not without reason. For the liberation movement was to start among the Kurds of south-eastern Turkey, and the deliberate intention was to exploit the Turkish Kurd's desire for independence.

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

Lillian Hellman's Scoundrel Time

By Sidney Hook

LILLIAN HELLMAN enjoys a wide reputation: students pay her homage, reviewers praise her books. A recent play on the McCarthy era presents her as a martyred heroine, radiant in the glow of the spotlight. She is also a brilliant polemicist, skilled in moralising even at the expense of truth, honour and common sense. And she has spun a myth about her past that has misled the reading public of at least two countries.

Let us imagine the following case.

A woman of some literary talent and reputation who, although not a card-holding member of the Nazi German-American Bund, which flourished in the 1930s, is the mistress of one of its leading figures, and hobnobs with its political leaders in the circles in which she moves. She signs denunciations of the victims of Hitler's purges and frame-up trials as "spies and wreckers" whose degenerate character has been established, and characterises the Nazi holocaust as a purely internal affair of a progressive country whose "policies have resulted in a higher standard of living for the people." She attacks a Commission of Inquiry, headed by a noted American philosopher, to discover the truth about juridical affairs in Nazi Germany. At every political turn as Hitler consolidates his power and screws tighter the pitch of his terror against his own people and those of other lands, she lauds his rule. She plays a leading role in organising cultural front organisations as transmission belts for the Nazi Party line. When Berlin launches a phoney Peace Conference, she serves as a keynote speaker denying its true auspices and savagely assailing its critics. When artists and literary figures rally to provide relief for the victims of Nazi oppression, she sabotages their efforts by insisting that charity begins at home. She visits Nazi Germany four times and returns without uttering a single word of criticism of its *gleichgeschaltet* culture, and its concentration camps.

Disturbed by the growing influence of the German-American Bund and other political groups controlled by foreign governments, Congress authorises one of its committees to investigate their activities and the sources of their plentiful funds. The legitimacy of the inquiry is upheld by the highest courts. It turns out that many members and sympathisers of the Bund are found in the entertainment industry. By this time because the true nature of the Nazi régime has been discovered by many; and because the United States is virtually at war with Hitler, some witnesses subpoenaed and under oath, and therefore subject to penalties of perjury, testify truly about their past involvements and experiences. Some refuse to testify about their membership, invoke the First Amendment, and risk being jailed for contempt. Others invoke the privilege of the Fifth Amendment on the ground that their truthful testimony would tend to incriminate them. Some like the woman in question invoke the Fifth Amendment not on the ground that their truthful testimony would tend to incriminate *them* but that it would tend to incriminate *others*—which really constitutes an abuse of the Fifth Amendment. Some who publicly claim to have been falsely identified as members of the Bund, when invited to confirm or deny the charge, nonetheless invoke the Fifth Amendment.

Much of the interrogation appears, and indeed is, irrelevant or foolish. Some of the Committee members are interested in making headlines and (in the changed climate of hostile opinion to Germany), political capital out of the investigation. Nonetheless, considerable evidence is uncovered of penetration by members and sympathisers of the Bund into various areas of American cultural life, especially the entertainment industry. Partly out of conviction and partly out of a sense of guilt at the shabby way they earned their swollen salaries in Hollywood, members and fellow travellers paid large sums of money into the coffers of the Bund. Some of them were well enough organised to place obstacles in the way of outspoken critics of Nazi causes who sought employment.

The entertainment industry is run for profit. Its moguls are exceedingly sensitive to what affects public favour and box-office receipts. Not surprisingly, owners and producers became fearful of employing those identified under oath as members of the Nazi German-American Bund, or who invoked the Fifth Amendment, lest any film, play or programme with which they are associated become the target of a public boycott. An informal blacklist developed and some racketeers sought to exploit the situation. Some economic hardship resulted. Blacklisted writers peddled their scripts under pseudonyms. However, in a few short years, the war-time hostilities with Germany having been forgotten, those who suffered temporary economic hardship resumed their prosperous careers.

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WHAT WOULD ONE THINK of the woman in this parable who, in 1976, strikes the pose of a heroine who defied the Congressional Inquisition and empties the vials of her wrath on anti-Fascists in the intellectual and literary community who allegedly stood idly by when she was questioned about her involvement with leading Nazi members and organisations? What would one think of this woman who now lamely asserts that her only fault was being a little late in recognising "the sins" of Hitler—despite all the evidence that had accumulated over the forty years from the time she had endorsed the first of Hitler's mass purges?

FOR THE NAZI GERMAN-AMERICAN BUND in the above hypothetical account substitute the Communist Party. For the woman in question—Lillian Hellman who in her book *Scoundrel Time*[1] seems to have duped a generation of critics devoid of historical memory and critical common sense.

WHEN LILLIAN HELLMAN was subpoenaed to appear before the House Committee, the United States was in effect at war with two Communist Powers—North Korea and China. The threat of involvement with the USSR loomed large in popular consciousness. The leaders of the Communist Party had declared that in case of conflict with the Soviet Union they would not support the United States. The record of Communist actions, at home and abroad, had generated fear in the American people—and not only among them—of forcible Communist expansion. It began with the violation of the treaties about free elections in Eastern Europe; followed by the revelations of Igor Gouzenko (the code clerk in the Russian Embassy in Ottawa) of massive Soviet espionage in Canada and the US by domestic Communists; the Communist take-over in Czechoslovakia; the arrest and conviction of Klaus Fuchs, Allen Nunn May, Harry Gold, the Rosenbergs, David Greenglass and other atomic spies; testimony of Communist penetration into some of the most sensitive areas of government; the trials and conviction of Alger Hiss; the Communist blockade of Berlin; the hazardous and costly Berlin air lift; Communist support of rebels in Greece and Turkey; the invasion of South Korea (June 1950). Whatever one thinks of the wisdom of Congressional investigations—and despite Lillian Hellman's contention to the contrary, their methods and areas of investigations were *often* criticised by liberals!—they did not create the climate of concern about Communist aggression abroad and Communist penetration within. That was a consequence of historical events. CIO trade-unionists and NAACP Negro leaders were barring Communist-controlled locals from their organisation; leading figures in Americans for Democratic Action and the Socialist Party (notably Arthur Schlesinger jr. and Norman Thomas) as well as independent anti-Communist liberals, even when criticising the excesses of the investigating committees, were exposing the unscrupulous behaviour of Communist cells in every organisation they joined. The concern on the part of the public with security was quite legitimate. One of the great spokesmen of the liberal tradition, Walter Lippmann, even advocated outlawing the Communist Party; fortunately it was never done. Certainly the public had a right to know who was financing the Communist Party—why nothing had been done to counteract the infiltration of members of its underground apparatus into sensitive Government agencies—and what ostensibly neutral organisations, political and cultural, that Party had established in order to penetrate the structure of American life.

THAT LILLIAN HELLMAN SHOULD have been called as a witness before a Congressional committee investigating Communist organisations and activity in the entertainment industry (even if she had not been identified in sworn testimony as present at a meeting organised by Communist Party functionaries to enlist prominent writers as members-at-large) was to be expected. The record of her activity as a participant and defender of Communist causes was notorious.

During the 1930s she defended all the Moscow Trials, attacked the John Dewey Commission of Inquiry for trying to establish the truth about them, worked hand-in-glove with the Party fraction in organisations like the League of American Writers and the Theatre Arts Committee. She went along with almost every twist and turn of the Party line. During the Soviet-Finnish War when a theatrical relief committee for the victims of Soviet aggression was organised, it was attacked by Lillian Hellman (among others in the Theatre Arts Committee) on the grounds that "charity begins at home", and that it was a disguised form of intervention abroad—this from the very persons who had been conspicuously active in organising or supporting committees for Communist relief causes all over the world!

Throughout her self-serving book Lillian Hellman fails to distinguish between two types of witnesses charged with membership before the

[1] *Scoundrel Time*. By LILLIAN HELLMAN. Little, Brown & Co., $7.95; Macmillan, £4.95.

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Congressional Committees—those who were truly identified as being members of the Communist Party, and those who were falsely so identified. To her all investigation of Communist activity was a witch-hunt. One could argue (and many liberal anti-Communists did) that Congressional inquiries into education and culture would have a chilling effect upon teachers and other professionals, and that whatever abuses and misconduct by Communists existed in those fields—and there were plenty!—could be dealt with by the practitioners in these fields themselves, without bringing in the state or government. Some took the same position with respect to Communist infiltration in the fields of labour and religion (*cf.* the editorial in *The New Republic* for 20 April 1953, "Communists in the Churches"). But this is not at all Miss Hellman's view. She is opposed to any investigation of members of the Communist Party under any auspices. She fiercely attacks any attempt by Congressional committees to identify members of the Communist Party, even in the most sensitive posts of Government, who had slipped through defective and often non-existent safeguards of the security system. She dismisses the evidence against Alger Hiss in a footnote that betrays her ignorance, really indifference, to the evidence.[2]

Roger Baldwin (the founder and long-time head of the American Civil Liberties Union, and a consistent critic of some of the techniques of Congressional investigations) once observed: "A superior loyalty to a foreign government disqualifies a citizen for service to our own." Miss Hellman would have us believe, despite the oaths and pledges that Communist Party members took during those years to defend the Soviet Union, that they were no more of a security risk than any others. To be sure membership in the Communist Party did not mean that given the opportunity, all members necessarily would be guilty of betrayal of their trust. One may ask: "Are there not some who would refuse to play this role?" The best answer to this question was made by Clement Attlee after the Pontecorvo affair in Britain: "There is no way of distinguishing such people from those who, if opportunity offered, would be prepared to endanger the security of the state in the interests of another power. . . ."

OF COURSE THERE CAN BE NO reasonable comparison between the capacities and opportunities for mischief of Communists in sensitive posts in government and Communists in the field of education and culture. Had Miss Hellman recognised this her position would be a little stronger. But her unqualified contention that the investigation of Communists any time and anywhere was a witch-hunt—a subversion of freedom of thought, a persecution of mere heresy rather than of conspiracy and underground secrecy wherever Communist cells functioned—testifies to the faithfulness with which she has followed the official Communist line. She does not regard it as conceivable that one could sincerely oppose *both* the Communists and Senator Joseph McCarthy—the Communists for what they truly represented, the existence and extension of the Gulag Archipelago . . . and McCarthy for making their work easier by his irresponsible accusations and exaggerations.

INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED AS members of the Communist Party, and who did not deny it, fell into three main groups—(*1*) those who told the truth, (*2*) those who refused to answer questions about their membership on grounds of the First Amendment; and (*3*) those who invoked the privilege against self-incrimination of the Fifth Amendment. In all such cases the motivations for testifying, or not testifying, were mixed; but to Miss Hellman this needlessly complicates matters.

She refers to those who told the truth about their past as "friendly witnesses": these are the "scoundrels." She refuses to believe that anyone who told the truth could have been genuinely disillusioned with Communist behaviour and, as the record of Communist penetration and deception unfolded, was shamed by a sense of guilt at having abetted the Communist cause at home and Communist régimes of terror abroad. To her the only "honourable" persons were

[2] According to Miss Hellman the only evidence against Hiss was contained in the documents secreted by Whittaker Chambers in the famous pumpkin. And of these she says that

> "the only things that had been found in Chambers' pumpkin were five rolls of microfilm, two developed, three in metal containers, most of the frames were unreadable, none of them had anything to do with the charges against Alger Hiss."

She could not be more wrong. A great deal of the evidence against Hiss had nothing to do with the contents of the pumpkin (*viz.*, all of the papers that were typed on the Hiss Woodstock typewriter). The two developed microfilm rolls of the five in the pumpkin consisted of photographs of memoranda from State Department office files to which Hiss had access and of mimeographed copies of cables from abroad that were initialled by Hiss. The other three microfilms—which were not introduced in evidence at the trials—contained unclassified material. (Espionage agents never know what the home office already has or might find useful.)

Miss Hellman's reference to the Hiss case is characteristic. On crucial matters, whenever her testimony can be checked by the record it turns out to be misleading or false. The two rolls of developed microfilm bore directly on the charge against Alger Hiss.

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those who refused to testify if their truthful testimony required that others be implicated. The "betrayers" were only those who did testify regardless of the consequences to others and themselves. But these terms are narrowly defined to fit only the Communist cause.

When the director of the Ku Klux Klan of the state of Alabama was sentenced to jail for refusing to produce Klan records of membership before a Grand Jury, he pleaded that he was bound by a sacred oath of secrecy, and that to reveal the names of the members would be an act of betrayal. Miss Hellman never raised a murmur against his conviction, and it is not likely that she would characterise his actions as "honourable." She scoffs at the notion that members of the Communist Party—even their hardened functionaries—in defending the political and cultural terror of the Soviet régime and its satellites were actually "betraying" the ideals of human freedom and of their own country. Even those like Eric Russell Bentley, who disapproved of the Congressional inquiries, wrote *apropos* of the Miller case:

> "I object ... to the assumption that what is involved is the question of honour and betrayal with 'honour' always meaning the protection of Communists and 'betrayal' always meaning the revelation of Communist activity. For after all, there is also such a thing as betrayal of the United States and honourable refusal to betray the United States. Who has been betraying whom?"[3]

NOT ONLY IS Lillian Hellman altogether unreliable in describing the "friendly" witnesses before the Congressional Committees, she does not tell the truth about the liberal and socialist anti-Communists of the time.

She gives the impression that with hardly any exceptions they were either sympathetic to the investigations or silent out of fear of losing the perquisites of the high positions they occupied. She states flatly: "No editor or contributor of *Commentary* ever protested against McCarthy." The truth is that several editors and contributors protested at his vicious exaggerations not only in the relatively uninfluential pages of that publication but frequently in *The New York Times*.[4]

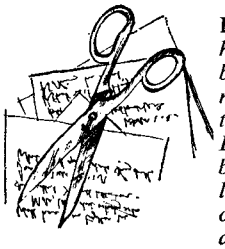
The manner in which Lillian Hellman refers to these anti-Communist liberals shows that what she cannot forgive them for is not so much their alleged failure to criticise McCarthy but (despite her belated—in 1976!—acknowledgment of

[3] *The New Republic* (10 September 1956). Since writing this and other pieces in a similar vein, and at the time in personal letters to me, Eric Bentley has reversed himself. In his *Thirty Years of Treason* (N.Y., 1970) he praises both Arthur Miller and Lillian Hellman for the stand they took, and out-McCarthys McCarthy by identifying the position of liberal critics of McCarthy—who attacked McCarthy when Bentley remained silent—with the position of "McCarthyism."

[4] The first call for the organisation of a national movement to retire McCarthy from public life was published in the *New York Times* (3 May 1953) by a contributor to *Commentary, Partisan Review*, and the *New Leader*—at the height of Senator McCarthy's power. The best book on the subject during that period, *McCarthy and Communism*, was published by James Rorty and Moshe Decter in 1954 under the auspices of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, and received the encomiums of liberal figures like Reinhold Niebuhr and Elmer Davis.

"Scoundrel Time"

New York City



LITTLE BROWN & COMPANY *has declined to publish a book of essays and commentary by Diana Trilling, the critic and widow of Lionel Trilling, allegedly because she refused to delete several passages critical of Lillian Hellman, the author and dramatist.*

The passages, according to sources familiar with the dispute, constituted a response to Miss Hellman's critical references to Mr. and Mrs. Trilling in her current best-selling book, "Scoundrel Time", a memoir of the McCarthy period published by Little Brown.

Mrs. Trilling acknowledged in an interview that the publishing company had cancelled her contract for the untitled book because of her refusal to delete or modify at least four passages. She refused to describe the questioned passages and declined to comment on whether they referred to Miss Hellman.

At one point in "Scoundrel Time", Miss Hellman notes that Lionel Trilling wrote an article for "The New York Review of Books", commenting favorably on Whittaker Chambers, an acknowledged Communist who turned against Communism and denounced Alger Hiss as a party member.

Miss Hellman then recalled "asking myself how Diana and Lionel Trilling, old, respected friends, could have come out of the same age and time with such different political and social views from my own."

Lionel Trilling, an internationally famed literary critic and professor emeritus at Columbia University, died last year at the age of 70. Mrs. Trilling, whose criticisms of art and literature have appeared in numerous periodicals and newspapers, said yesterday that she had been working for more than a decade on the book that Little Brown had now refused to publish.

NEW YORK TIMES

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Stalin's "sins") their criticism of the crimes of Stalin and his successors during the forty years in which she apologised for them. Her reference to these anti-Communist liberals also betrays the priggishness of the unconsciously would-be-assimilated 100% American whose ancestors had reached American shores a few boatloads ahead of other immigrants. Of these intellectuals she writes that

> "many of them found in the sins of Stalin Communism—and there were plenty of sins and plenty that for a long time I mistakenly denied—the excuse to join those who should have been their hereditary enemies. Perhaps that in part was the penalty of nineteenth-century immigration. The children of timid immigrants are often remarkable people: energetic, intelligent, hardworking; and often they make it so good that they are determined to keep it at any costs."

What she conceals from the reader is that those she criticises did not wait for the emergence of McCarthy to combat Stalinism at home and abroad. They began in 1933 when Stalin did his bit to help Hitler come to power. She also conceals the fact that McCarthy was elected with the support of the Communist Party to the Senate in 1946, defeating the incumbent liberal anti-communist Robert La Follette, jr., who had opposed the treaties of Teheran and Yalta. It took McCarthy four years to become an "anti-Communist crusader" of the nationalist, isolationist variety. She conceals the facts that when McCarthy was riding high, like Congressman Martin Dies before him, he lumped together welfare-state socialists and liberals with Communists; that what contributed to McCarthy's influence (before he did himself in by attacking the Army) was the spectacle of scores of Communist witnesses remaining silent, or invoking the Fifth Amendment, as the picture of Communist penetration in American life unfolded; that American reactionaries (who were criticised by those whom Lillian Hellman attacks) seem to have agreed with her that these children of immigrants were the "penalty" for America's past immigration policy; and that few, if any, of these anti-Communist liberals and socialists ever "made it so good" as Lillian Hellman. Indeed, had they been as much concerned with "making it" as she, they would not have taken an open anti-Communist position when Miss Hellman and her Communist associates were running rampant in Hollywood and elsewhere and trying to bar "Trotskyite-Fascists"—as all anti-Stalinists were then called—from getting work or getting published.

LILLIAN HELLMAN pictures herself as a heroine defending intellectual and cultural freedom against her inquisitors. But she actually had nothing to fear from them. She claims that she was never a card-holding member of the Communist Party. If true she could not by her testimony identify on the basis of her own knowledge anyone else as a member. Anything else would merely be hearsay. She herself was never clearly identified as a member but only as "present" with leading Communists at a meeting fifteen years earlier—a meeting she cannot recall as having taken place. Since she has denied that she ever was a member of the Communist Party, to any question about *any other* person's membership she could have truthfully responded that she didn't know. The person who placed her at the meeting had admitted his own membership —she certainly could not have hurt him. Two days before her appearance she wrote the Committee that she was prepared to answer all questions about herself; but, if questioned about others, she would invoke the Fifth Amendment because she did not want to bring "bad trouble" to anyone else. She claims that she was the first witness to brave the wrath of the Committee with this defiant position.

The official records of her interrogation reveal that her entire present account is a compound of falsity and deliberate obfuscation. First of all, it is not true that she was the first of the witnesses to have taken the position that only if they were not questioned about others would they answer questions truthfully about themselves—a condition that no court or committee of inquiry can grant. Communists who were identified as members of the Party by the sworn testimony of former members had taken precisely the same approach; and Miss Hellman was merely following the pattern with minor variations. For example, on 19 May 1952 (the very day she wrote her letter and two days before her own appearance) a University of Buffalo teacher of philosophy refused on grounds of the Fifth Amendment to answer the question whether he had been a member of a Communist Party cell at Harvard during the late 1930s. He, too, had offered (in a letter to the Committee earlier in the month) to testify concerning his own "past associations and activities" but not about others.

The reason why members of the Communist Party took this tack should be clear. If they refused to answer any question on the grounds of the First Amendment, they risked an action for contempt. If they denied membership (as some members of the Communist Party had done in previous investigations in local areas like New York) they risked an action for perjury, if two witnesses who had been former members identified them. By invoking the Fifth Amendment as the ground for their refusal, they escaped

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answering any questions with impunity. In their case the admission of membership in the Communist Party might be self-incriminating under the Smith Act—although no ordinary member of the Party was ever prosecuted under it. The first victims of the Smith Act were *Trotskyists* whose conviction Miss Hellman's political allies gleefully applauded. In Miss Hellman's case, since she explicitly claims that she was *not* a member of the Communist Party—and that her refusal to say so was motivated only by reluctance to incriminate others—her invocation of the Fifth Amendment was really illegitimate because her truthful testimony could never have incriminated her.

EVEN MORE SURPRISING are the details of her testimony.

Some questions about her membership in the Communist Party she answers without invoking the Fifth Amendment. To the question: "Are you now a member of the Communist Party?" She answers: "No." "Were you yesterday?" She still answers: "No." "Were you last year at this time?" "No." "Two years ago from this time?" "No."

But to the question: "Three years ago at this time?" she refuses to answer on the grounds of self-incrimination. She does not explain why a truthful answer would tend to be self-incriminating to the question about her membership in the Communist Party in 1949 but not in 1950, 1951, and 1952.

The Committee was satisfied with her response and, happily for her, took no legal action, for its apparent strategy was to convince the country that those who invoked the Fifth Amendment had something to hide. Technically, of course, under the law an innocent person could invoke the Fifth Amendment. A police officer, for example, earning $15,000 a year and questioned as to whether the $500,000 in his vault was "graft", could invoke the Fifth Amendment, whether he was guilty or innocent, and stay out of jail. But, after a departmental hearing, he could very well lose his post, unless he could rebut the presumption of unfitness to hold a position of trust created by his refusal to answer a question germane to his professional responsibilities. As Jeremy Bentham pointed out long ago the refusal to answer on grounds of possible self-incrimination creates an inescapable presumption of guilt even if that presumption is rebuttable.

WHETHER OR NOT ONE AGREES with his politics—which were abominable since he, too, was a committed apologist for Stalin's terror and upheld its necessity as a teacher in the Party school—Dashiell Hammett's course in refusing to testify was certainly more straightforward than Lillian Hellman's. The record of her own interrogation as well as of others gives the lie to the artful reconstruction of her behaviour as a morally defiant witness. She relates an incident—unreported by anyone else present (newsmen were there in large numbers)—according to which after her letter had been read by the Committee's counsel, a journalist loudly exclaimed: "Thank God somebody finally had the guts to do it!" This is implausible on its face. What she did had indeed been done before; and it required no guts at all to invoke the Fifth Amendment. It was a ticket to safety.

Oddly enough, although her reason for refusing to testify truthfully about herself was that she would cause "bad trouble" to others, on the occasions when she proceeded to invoke the Fifth Amendment she could not possibly have compromised or even embarrassed them. When asked whether she was "acquainted" with Martin Berkeley she invoked the Fifth. But since Berkeley was a self-confirmed former member whose testimony had identified her as present at a meeting in his house, she could not have harmed him in the least. When asked if she was "acquainted" with V. J. Jerome (who was a member of the Political Committee of the Communist Party and in charge of organising Communist Party cells in Hollywood), she also invoked the Fifth. The same for John Howard Lawson. She could not have possibly caused them trouble if, as she now assures us, she was not a member of the Communist Party during that time. By denying that she was a member in 1952, 1951 and 1950, and invoking the privilege against self-incrimination for periods earlier, she creates the presumption that she told the truth neither then nor now.

LILLIAN HELLMAN IS NOT ONLY disingenuous, to put it mildly, about her defiance of the House Committee but also about her "involvement" with the Communist movement even if she is given the benefit of every doubt about whether she was technically a dues-paying member. Throughout her book she gives the impression that she really knew little about the political doings going on around her; that the discussions she heard or overheard made no sense to her; that it sounded like gobbledygook; and that her relations with the Communist Party were remote, the result of association with Dashiell Hammett, on the one hand, and her opposition to Fascism on the other. Yet the internal evidence of this book, and her explicit statement about her political education in a previous book, make it extremely difficult to swallow her artful picture of herself as a rebel and a Bohemian not seriously interested in politics.

By her own account in this book she was up

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to her neck in politics. She played an important role in both the official and unofficial front activities of the Communist Party. She met with "high officials" of the Party to discuss the behaviour of the Party fraction in former Vice-President Henry Wallace's Progressive Party. She was privately opposed (she tells us) to the Communist domination of the Progressive Party although its role in organising it was patent even to outsiders. She presents a jeering caricature of Henry Wallace as a kind of eccentric hick and skinflint at a time when the worst thing about him was his invincible political innocence. Subsequently, when he turned against the Communists and denounced them (*New York Herald Tribune*, 14 February 1952) for their "force, deceit, and intrigues", and their activities in the Progressive Party, Miss Hellman taxes him with lying—*i.e.*, he knew it all along because she had told him that Communists were in the Progressive Party when he had asked her about it.

But Lillian Hellman is no more just to Henry Wallace than to others. Wallace had publicly recognised the damage the Communist Party was doing to the cause of genuine Progressives when he declared in a speech at Center Sandwich, N.H., in the Fall of 1948: "If the Communists would only run a ticket of their own, the Progressive Party would gain 3,000,000 votes." What Wallace did not know is what Miss Hellman did not tell him—that the Communist Party had infiltrated into the strategic organisational posts of the Progressive Party, and that she had the evidence of it. What she did tell him when he questioned her was that indeed there were some Communists in the Progressive Party and "that the hard, dirty work in the office is done by them. . . . I don't think they mean any harm: they're stubborn men." This was not an accurate account of their role, and she knew it.

In her previous book,[5] Miss Hellman has said enough to make incredible her claim in *this* book that all the strange talk about "dictatorship and revolution" she heard in Communist circles struck her as outlandish. She says she came late to radicalism. But towards the end of the 1930s she undertook a study of Communist doctrine and embarked on an intensive

> "kind of reading I had never seriously done before. In the next few years, I put aside most other books for Marx and Engels, Lenin, Saint-Simon, Hegel, Feuerbach. Certainly I did not study with the dedication of a scholar, but I did read with the attention of a good student, and Marx as a man, and Engels and his Mary became for a while, more real to me than my friends."

If she could read Hegel we can be sure that she had no difficulty with the catechismic texts of Stalin although she curiously omits his name. Nor did she stop with reading. She checked her knowledge against the superior knowledge of Dashiell Hammett whose Communist political orthodoxy, despite any private doubts, was sufficiently reliable to qualify him for teaching at the Party school.

> "I would test my reading on Dash, who had years before, in his usual thorough fashion, read all the books I was reading and more."

Therefore, when she tells us in her most recent book that precisely during and after this period of intensive study "the over-heated arguments, spoken and printed about dictatorship and repression puzzled me"—as if she were a Marilyn Monroe who had fallen among Marxists—she is singularly unpersuasive. Miss Hellman may or may not have been a member of the Communist Party but until Stalin died she was not only a convinced Communist but a Stalinist; and for all her posturing about not really knowing what "dictatorship" means she may still be a Communist. She is no longer a Stalinist but it is not clear when she ceased being one. Communists ceased defending Stalin only after Nikita Khrushchev's revelations at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956.

LILLIAN HELLMAN'S MOST valuable contribution to the Communist cause was her activity on behalf of their front organisations. A few months after the Progressive Party imbroglio, she was called upon to serve as a keynote speaker at the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace at the Waldorf-Astoria (New York, 25–26 March 1949). This conference was a follow-up of the World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace at Wroclau-Breslau in Communist Poland (25–28th August 1948) and was preparatory to the World Peace Conference in Paris (20–23 April 1949). The Waldorf meeting was held at the height of the Zhdanov purge of Soviet intellectuals. It barred from its programme anyone who was critical of Communist party dogma of the class nature of science (including this writer who had, at first, been accepted by a rather careless programme committee). The foreign-policy line the Conference took was identical with that of the Kremlin: to wit, the United States was the chief enemy of peace and the instigator of the Cold War against the peaceful and freedom-loving Soviet Union. It even refused to give the platform to the Reverend A. J. Muste who was prepared to blame *both* the US and the USSR for the Cold war. Lillian Hellman valiantly defended the Conference against its critics—whose chief point of protest was the refusal of the Conference to speak up for the dissenting or nonconforming intellectuals who were being martyred in Communist countries (although the Conference adopted resolutions condemning the court

[5] *An Unfinished Woman* (1969).

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proceedings against Communist leaders under the Smith Act as "heresy trials of political philosophies and attempts to limit and destroy the right of association"). To serve as spokesman for a Conference of this kind was a very strange role indeed for a self-denominated life-long "rebel" against organisation . . . at a time when the location and character of the slave-labour camps in the Gulag Archipelago had become public knowledge.

THROUGHOUT HER BOOK Miss Hellman claims to be aware of "the sins of Stalin", acknowledging only that she was a little late in seeing them. It is only natural to wonder at what point, or when, she saw them; and what she did after she saw them.

It is reasonable to assume that whenever she became aware of them, even if she remained a critic of the sins of her own country, she would not have endorsed measures and organisations that extended the sway or influence of the sinful Stalin and his régime. For otherwise it would have betrayed a degree of hypocrisy and deviousness hard to reconcile with her celebrated forthright nature—so quick to anger when she is bamboozled or pushed around. Nor is it unreasonable to expect that after endorsing in her ignorance so many of "the sins of Stalin"—a curious phrase for "political crimes" since Miss Hellman does not really believe in sin—when she realised their true nature, she would in some way at some point make some public acknowledgment of her discovery. This has been the history of many idealistic Communists and Communist sympathisers who became alienated by some particularly vile outrage or betrayal of the cause with which they had been publicly identified. Certainly, if some former Nazi fellow-traveller were to write in 1976 that, although late, he had become aware of "the sins of Hitler", we would be curious to know when he learned about them, and what he had said or done on making the discovery. (Even Albert Speer has given us thousands of pages of details.)

The record of what Lillian Hellman has written—and not written—makes it clear that she did not know about the political crimes of Stalin during the Purges and Moscow Frame-Up Trials of the '30s, the deportations of the peasants and the resulting famine in the Ukraine; the Nazi-Soviet Pact; the invasion of Poland and the destruction of the Baltic States; the Soviet attack on Finland; the surrender of German Jewish Communists who had fled in 1933 to the Soviet Union by Stalin to Hitler in 1940; the liquidation of the anti-Fascist Jewish leaders, Alter and Ehrlich, by Stalin as "spies for Hitler"; the Katyn massacre of the Polish officers; the mass executions and deportations of returning Russian prisoners-of-war after World War II; the overthrow of the democratic Czechoslovak government in 1948; the Zhdanov purges and executions; the Berlin blockade; the Communist invasion of South Korea; the suppression of the German workers' revolt in East Berlin and East Germany in 1953.

Until Stalin died there is not a particle of evidence that Lillian Hellman regarded any of his actions as sinful or politically criminal. Even after Khrushchev's revelations in which he more than confirmed the findings of the John Dewey Commission of Inquiry, denounced by Miss Hellman twenty years earlier, did she by so much as a word signal her awareness of the nature of Stalin's crimes. She remained mute.

Nor did she speak out when Khrushchev sent in Red Army tanks to crush the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Nor has her voice been heard in criticism of "the sins" or political crimes of Stalin's and Khrushchev's successors—the construction of (and the shootings at) the Berlin Wall, or the renewed persecutions of Soviet dissenters and their incarceration in insane asylums. After all, Miss Hellman visited the Soviet Union in 1937, 1944, 1966, and 1967. But not a single word of criticism of what she saw or heard or of disavowal of her past tributes to the Soviet Union appeared. Not even the brutal invasion of 1968 by Soviet tanks in Czechoslovakia moved her to public protest. By this time even the American Communist Party, the most supine of the Kremlin's pensioners, had shown enough independence to make a feeble protest against Soviet anti-Semitism.

Writing in 1976 she expects us to accept without question her assurance that she had long seen through the horrors and systematic oppression of the Communist régimes. It is hard to do this if only because, as this book reveals, she *still* regards those opposed to the extension of Communist influence as greater enemies of human freedom and the decencies of political life than the Communists ever were. Of the Communists she writes with sadness and pity: of the liberal anti-Communists she writes with virulent hatred. By her attack on them she seeks to distract attention from the many years she faithfully served as an acolyte in the "personality cult", Khrushchev's euphemism for the total terror under Stalin. In this she is banking on the absence of historical memory on the part of most of her readers.

THIS ABSENCE OF HISTORICAL MEMORY is illustrated in the introductions to both the American and English edition of the book by Garry Wills and James Cameron.

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The introduction by Wills, reprinted as an appendix in the English edition, goes further than the most extreme of the revisionist positions on the Cold War. According to him, Truman (despite his opposition to the House Committee on Un-American Activities and to McCarthy) was the true architect of the Cold War. The Communists abroad were blameless, and the Communists at home were merely victims of a reaction to Roosevelt's enlightened policies. Indeed, the Cold War was inspired by domestic considerations. Wills flatly states that "Truman launched the Cold War in the Spring of 1947 with his plan to 'rescue' Greece and Turkey. . . ." All unprovoked, of course. There was nothing, or no one, to rescue them from. "We had a world to save with just those plans", he goes on to say, "from NATO to the Korean War. . . ." It appears, then, that Truman's Plan, with which all of America's Western Allies readily agreed, as early as 1947 envisaged the invasion of Korea in the summer of 1950. Wills must believe that either Dean Acheson's declaration that Korea was beyond the sphere of American national interest was a deliberate provocation by the State Department to lure the North Koreans into invading South Korea or that South Korea at the instigation of the United States invaded North Korea. Presumably the US intimidated the United Nations to support the defence of South Korea. Wills has unconsciously reconstructed the Kremlin's propaganda line. The only omission is the failure to charge the United States with the guilt of conducting germ warfare in North Korea. Wills' account of the domestic political scene in the United States during this period is no more accurate than his flyer in foreign-policy demonology.

It is not likely that Wills will find many credulous readers who are old enough to remember the past. But among them we must number James Cameron who has written the introduction to the English edition. He confesses that he does not know Lillian Hellman, and it is clear that he does not know the United States, its recent history, and the details of the period he writes about with such sublime indifference to the record. He even believes that "Scoundrel Time is come again" in America although he leaves unclear who the Scoundrels are this time. The John Deans whose testimony, bartered for immunity from prosecution, helped convict the Watergate defendants? Or those convicted? He is also unclear about the British scene. He asks:

> "Why did our society never have the McCarthy trauma? Because we were too mature. . . ? Because our constitution, being unwritten, was too flexible? Because we produced no paranoic like McCarthy? Perhaps—but also because we had too few Lillian Hellmans."

But why should the presence of more Lillian Hellmans generate McCarthyism? Is Cameron saying that if there had been as many Communist fellow-travellers, guilty of the same hypocrisy and duplicity in British cultural and political life as in the USA, the reaction would have been the same? The British Communists, except for those recruited by the Soviets as espionage agents, were never as conspiratorial as the American Communists and were not instructed to penetrate government agencies.

NOR DOES THE ENGLISH constitution have anything to do with it. If anything its flexibility could lend itself to even greater abuse since there is no Supreme Court to override Parliamentary legislation. English courts have never made absolutes of any right, or tolerated abuses of the privilege against self-incrimination. Actually, in Britain from 1947 on, not only were members of the Communist Party completely barred from secret work but also all persons associated with the Party in such a way "as to raise reasonable doubts about their reliability." After the defection of Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean the recommendations of a White Paper by Privy Councillors were accepted by the British Government in 1956. It reaffirmed the basic principle on which earlier security measures were based that "the Communist faith overrides a man's normal loyalties to his country", and extended them to embrace the much wider circle of "sympathisers" and "associates." These are vague and ill-defined terms, and they required good sense and a genuine dedication to liberal values and individual liberties to apply them without miscarriages of justice. The procedures of American Security Boards were in some respect much fairer than their British counterparts. Civil servants in Britain who were under investigation were never told of the evidence against them; they were denied rights of legal counsel and even of representation at hearings. They had no right of appeal from the verdict of the Tribunal to a higher administrative body or to a Court.

Nonetheless, the American procedures worked more hardships and injustices because they were, as a rule, administered by Democratic and Republican Party regulars who were politically ignorant of the wide spectrum of beliefs different from their own and who, as I once put it, "found the distinctions between member, sympathiser, front, dupe, innocent, and an honestly mistaken liberal as mysterious as the order of beings in the science of angelology. . . ."

Even before Joe McCarthy appeared on the scene, public identification under sworn testimony had been made of individuals occupying the following posts in the American government:

(*1*) an executive assistant to the President;
(*2*) an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury;

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(*3*) the director of the Office of Special Political Affairs in the State Department;
(*4*) the secretary of the International Monetary Fund;
(*5*) the chief of the Latin American Division of the Office of Strategic Services;
(*6*) a member of the National Labor Relations Board;
(*7*) the chief counsel of the Senate Subcommittee on Civil Liberties;
(*8*) the chief of the Statistical Analysis Branch of the War Production Board;
(*9*) a US Treasury attaché in China;
(*10*) the Treasury Department representatives and adviser in the Financial Control Division of the North African Economic Board in UNRRA, and at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers Council in Moscow in 1947;
(*11*) the director of the National Research Project of the Works Progress Administration.

What would the public reaction in Britain have been if individuals of similar government rank and influence had been identified as members of the Communist Party after the Klaus Fuchs case? Probably not as virulent as the American reaction, but it is not altogether excluded that even James Cameron might have been more perturbed than he seems to be. He would have to recognise the difference between non-existent witches and Communist subversives.

IT IS IN THIS ATMOSPHERE that demagogues like McCarthy seized their opportunity. Ritualistic liberals played into their hands, not by deservedly criticising their excesses and irresponsibility, but by denying that Communist Party infiltration into government existed. The Communists and their sympathisers contributed to eliciting public support for the investigative committees by invoking the Fifth Amendment, even when it was unnecessary, thus generating the impression that the conspiratorial activity was on a vaster scale than it actually was.

THE GREATEST DAMAGE done by Senator Joseph McCarthy—whom Miss Hellman never faced—was to the American Foreign Service. His irresponsible charges against a few who may have been guilty of political naïveté—the Chinese Communists were, after all, not mere "agrarian reformers"—tended to inhibit critical independent judgment of American policy among their colleagues. McCarthy headed the "Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations" which should not be confused with the "Subcommittee on Internal Security of the Committee on the Judiciary" whose proceedings, in comparison with McCarthy's Committee as well as those of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, were fairly meticulously conducted. There is no need to deny, as Miss Hellman does, that the disclosures before the House Committee about Alger Hiss and other key figures named by Whittaker Chambers were genuine. But they would not have been necessary had responsible security officers quietly acted on information which they had long before the Hearings. The aura of the Hiss case kept the House Committee going for a long time; but it hardly compensated for the vigilantism, cultural irrationalism, and national distrust generated by its successive Chairmen and leading members who exploited their roles for cheap political publicity. Their excesses made intelligent criticism of the Communism of that period—the heyday of Stalinism—more difficult.

For someone like Lillian Hellman, who loyally cooperated with members of the Communist Party in all sorts of political and cultural enterprises for almost forty years, to impugn the integrity of liberal anti-Communists like Lionel Trilling and others of his circle is an act of political obscenity.

THE CRITICISMS made by anti-Communist socialists and liberals during these years have been vindicated by events. They insisted on the central distinction between "heresy" whose defence is integral to a free society and "conspiracy" whose secrecy is inimical to it.

This distinction was often ignored by the investigating committee and sometimes by their critics. A heretic is an honest defender of an unpopular idea. A conspirator is one who works stealthily and dishonestly outside the rules of the game. Our moral obligation is to the toleration of dissent, no matter how heretical, not to the toleration of conspiracy, no matter how disguised or secret. When that secrecy is combined with loyalty to a foreign power dedicated to the overthrow of free and open societies, a power that manipulates the activities of conspirators wherever they operate, the pitiless light of publicity must be brought to bear on the situation. Whatever may be the case in these polycentric days, during the years Miss Hellman writes about the evidence is overwhelming that Communists, even though their Party was legal, were organised secretly in parallel underground organisations under assumed names working for political objectives framed by the Party fraction. To be sure, they sometimes did other things as well, some of them worthy and all of them under deceptively high-sounding phrases, but only to increase their influence in furthering their underlying political purposes. Those who wittingly helped them, even if they paid no party dues, were morally as guilty in the deceptions they practised. They were engaged in helping to destroy the open society whose benefits and freedoms they enjoyed.

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LETTERS

"Monty in Cross-Fire"

IN a review, in the *New Statesman*, of Lord Chalfont's biography of Lord Montgomery, I said that he had written a thoroughly bad book because (*1*) having been denied access to the Field Marshal's private papers, he had nothing to add to what was already known from previously published sources; (*2*) he had tried to make up for this with gossip and hearsay which he had sedulously collected about the Field Marshal; and (*3*) had superimposed on this a great deal of superficial psychological rubbish.

If Lord Chalfont thinks this is unfair, he should tell us why. Instead, he takes the easier path [Authors & Critics, ENCOUNTER, December] of an *argumentum ad hominem*, by dismissing me as one prejudiced by hero-worship of Lord Montgomery. For this he has no evidence, except of course his own particular brand of psychological intuition. In his book he describes me as one of the intimate little circle of young personal liaison officers to whom the Field Marshal was so devoted, as they were to him. This is not true, as Lord Chalfont could have easily found out if he had taken the slightest trouble to do so. What is true is that, as I have tried to describe elsewhere, I admired the Field Marshal greatly as an immensely able and competent commander, and in my personal relations with him found him extremely likable. But this was a long way from hero-worship, and was in no way incompatible with recognition of the Field Marshal's failings.

Otherwise I cannot see that Lord Chalfont offers any answer to my criticisms of his book as a particularly deplorable exercise in psycho-history. He does indeed complain of being unable to understand my remark that "what the soldier said" is not evidence. Perhaps I should have spelled out my meaning, which was that hearsay does not constitute good evidence, even if it was Lord Chalfont who heard it.

When authors claim that they welcome criticism, it nearly always means that they resent it, especially if it is well-founded. Lord Chalfont is no exception.

GORONWY REES

London

Understanding Dick Crossman

I HAVE READ with fascination and much admiration George Watson's article, "Race and the Socialists" [November, 1976]. I wonder whether the following might not be a tantalising confirmation of the Watson thesis.

In *The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister* (Vol. I) by Richard Crossman I found the following sentence in an entry for 30 April 1965:

> "I was motored back to Prescote by a rich Jew with a Rolls Royce, a candidate in the Birmingham municipal elections." (p. 209).

I was rather puzzled by this reference and read on. In a diary entry for 2 August 1965, I found in a discussion on immigration policy this sentence:

> " . . . I am an old-fashioned Zionist who believes that anti-Semitism and racialism are endemic . . . " (p. 299)

In a transatlantic attempt to understand Crossman, I asked a friend of his during my recent visit to London, how he would explain the "rich Jew" reference. He replied that "R. H. S. Crossman was always a pompous ass who had a contempt not only for 'rich Jews' but also for most other people, Jews and non-Jews alike! . . . "

I wonder whether there are other explanations.

ARNOLD BEICHMAN

University of Massachusetts
Boston, Mass.

Reply to Stephen Haseler

THIS WILL BE THE FIRST and last time that I recommend a precept of Lord Chalfont's to anybody, but his admonition in your December issue could apply with utter relevance to the succeeding offering by Stephen Haseler, "Can British Socialism Survive?".

There are indeed "few spectacles more tediously unedifying than that of an author 'hitting back' at his critics." I am described as a "young" (thanks a lot), public school (true, but surely irrelevant to one so hostile to Labour's educational "levelling") Trotskyite (as true as any of Haseler's amalgams) for "implying" that it is objectionable for Haseler to make a whole book out of a banal distinction first drawn by William Rodgers. No such implication was present in my review. I said that the book was thoughtless, paranoid, and politically illiterate, as indeed it is. I compared it unfavourably to Robert Moss's far superior effort, and have not once heard that judgment queried either. But I never said that he shouldn't have a shot at writing a political book.

Your readers will be better able than most to judge whether Dr Kissinger is the right arbiter between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" dissent, as Haseler portrays him in your pages. They will also have assimilated enough of "a significant portion of Marxist analysis" to know the untruth of his contention that Marxists regard Parliament and representative democracy as a mere shadow thrown by the capitalist system. Marx's argument was always that democracy in civil society makes inroads into capitalist power; coexists uneasily with it; will transcend it or (under Kissinger-like auspices) be crushed by it. Any dogmatic argument to the contrary will, of course, end up by lumping Foot or Benn with Rakosi and Cunhal.

But it does not take this *reductio ad absurdum* (clumsily and recently demonstrated for us by Haseler's public antics) to show the argument as being weak in origin and ill-reasoned in debate. There are undemocratic and conspiratorial elements who like to use Marxist rhetoric, just as there are social democrats who make their peace with totalitarian trends, and Conservatives who turn to fascism in

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extremis. But it takes a Vyshinsky mentality like Haseler's to show that "objectively" people are enemies of the people, or as was said on another occasion "show me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are." He may hope to do better with the more credulous audience of the *Free Nation*, where "social democratic" ideas are doubtless taken more seriously by the grateful ultra-Conservatives who regard themselves as non-political.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

New Statesman
London

A Reply to Milton Friedman

By Lord Campbell of Eskan

AS A RESULT of my letter to *The Times* (26 October 1976) you were kind enough to offer me the opportunity of commenting upon Professor Milton Friedman's article ("The Line We Dare Not Cross") in the November issue of ENCOUNTER: adding that it would be more informative than the television snippet I had quoted. More informative indeed and more revealing of the remarkable assumptions upon which this eminent economist bases his criticism of the Welfare State.

In his concern about the preservation of freedom, Professor Friedman nowhere states what he would do about the very many who in the free-for-all which he appears to favour could not be free: the underprivileged, the oppressed, the unemployed, the disabled. He refers to freedom "on the Peloponnesian peninsula, in Athens"; but although he acknowledges slavery he makes no mention of the league of allied and subject cities on the exploitation of which rested the Athenian power and the freedom of her comparatively few citizens. He also refers to "the Renaissance in the Middle Ages" which certainly brought much freedom to the Borgias and the Conquistadores, but rather less to their victims. He mentions the period of freedom in the 18th and 19th centuries; but he does not explain what freedom did for black slaves and white child-labour and women.

His social analysis is no less simplistic. He states that almost every individual serves his self-interest, that nobody spends someone else's money as carefully as he spends his own and that the Welfare State tries to do good with money taken away from the taxpayer. From this he concludes that "the economic market is a more effective means for achieving political democracy than a political market."

These are tendentious propositions. The board and management of a corporation control its assets but rarely own them: the shareholders own them but rarely control them. In general, businessmen are no less in a position of trust for what they do not own than are the civil servants whom Professor Friedman castigates. And surely, in any case, one of the first conditions of civilised society is to find a balance and reconciliation between public trust and private self-interest.

All people have duties as well as rights, and in all societies those duties include contributions to common needs and causes. In Industrial Societies these contributions mostly take the form of taxation. I suppose if Professor Friedman believes in the unrestrained rights of property, taxation is no better than sheep-stealing or poaching. It is true that taxation is a restraint on economic freedom; but in society we all accept constraints upon freedom. We do so whenever we obey the collective wisdom or tradition or even passion which is expressed in the laws of the land. Does Professor Friedman think that economic actions should have some special exemption and be subject only to their own automatic laws, supposing that an agreed definition of those laws can be found?

Yet again, the economic market as he describes it is a theoretical abstraction. No board, no manager—one might almost say no one at all—acts on purely economic suppositions, except perhaps for those who are so poor as to have virtually no choice. All decisions are based on a mixture of motives, restraints, opportunities and judgments: ambition for power and reputation as well as economic growth and money; devotion to professional and technical standards as well as to efficiency, a sense of what is politically expedient and technically fertile, responsibility to community, customers and employers no less than shareholders—to take a few examples. Professor Friedman's "dollar for dollar relationship" is a concept too simple to describe any market at all: it is quite inadequate as a criterion for the social or political market.

SINCE SUCH IS the analysis, I am not surprised to find the description of present-day Britain quite unrecognisable. He thinks that Britain may be treading the same road as Chile to the destruction of freedom and democracy. He does not seem to think it relevant to his argument that Chile has been a client state for generations and that the failure of its attempts at freedom and democracy was not entirely due to the

LORD CAMPBELL *of Eskan is a Labour peer and one of the directors of the "New Statesman." He has been a director of London Weekend Television since 1967 and of the Commonwealth Development Corporation since 1968.*

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operation of impersonal economic forces. Judging by events in Chile we can at least be grateful that he makes no specific recommendations for Britain.

Where, despite our strains and stresses, can Professor Friedman point, all in all, to a more civilised country than Britain? Can he deny that the average Briton (I exclude peers, company chairmen, and university professors) is better off than he was 100 years ago: and this in terms not merely of money, but of health, housing, education and leisure? Would he suggest that the average Briton today has less freedom of conscience, political action, and social choice than 100 years ago? Could he dispute that this has been achieved not by reliance on market forces but by the unremitting pressure of radical thinkers, workers' unions and humanitarian organisations?

I am sure we have made mistakes. I am prepared to listen if I am told that our systems of administration, remuneration, taxation, and public-debt are far too clumsy and out-of-date for what is expected of them. But if I am asked to consider seriously the proposition that the only way to put them right is to abandon a Welfare State based on a mixed economy, I shall demand a more serious analysis and a more solid argument than Professor Friedman has offered; and clearer evidence that he understands the relativity, no less than the quality, of freedom.

House of Lords

MUSH IS MUSH, whether written by a peer or a peasant. Since Lord Campbell of Eskan offers so little to get one's teeth into, let me offer him two hard nuggets of fact to chew on.

1. Before World War II, the average real income of the resident of Britain was roughly twice that of the resident of Germany or France. Today, the average real income of the resident of Germany or France is roughly twice that of the resident of Britain.

Do the socialist and welfare-state policies of Britain in the post-war period have any responsibility for this astounding reversal?

2. A large majority of the beds in British hospitals under the National Health Service are in hospitals built before 1900 by private charity in that era of unrestrained *laissez-faire*.

Having pondered these facts—and the many others of like import available to anyone who has eyes to see and an open mind to evaluate—the good lord might contemplate on whose shoulders he is standing.

MILTON FRIEDMAN

Department of Economics
University of Chicago

Heidegger

IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE François Bondy so innocent of philosophy that he wonders why Heidegger ["European Notebook", ENCOUNTER, October] has had such an influence on French (and of course other) thinkers, writers, and intellectuals generally. Indeed, if Hegel dominates two centuries of speculation, Martin Heidegger, in a sub-class to Hegel, dominates our age with an even greater impact. A minority admire him under the false pretence that he restored attachment to Being, thus ontology, to its rightful place. This, to my mind, is a misunderstanding, and the majority of his adepts sense it very well.

For there is behind Heidegger, the "shepherd of Being", the radical negator of metaphysics, the man who makes a *tabula rasa* of philosophy from Socrates to Nietzsche. His popularity was generated by this absolute denial. For Heidegger does not attack only the Platonic doctrine of ideas, he dissolves Being too, which is not accessible to faith (God and religion are out of bounds), but not to reason either (reason is an evil guide, it rigidifies its object by re-presenting—*vor-stellen*—its object, including Being). Being for Heidegger is the object of a kind of cold mysticism—he admired Meister Eckhart, but Eckhart was a true mystic—an object to which only the "true philosopher" has access. What kind of access? Being unveils itself at certain times; but only the "philosopher", its shepherd, is able to interpret its message, not, indeed, through a rational discourse, but through attachment, guardianship, poetry—and silence.

Thus, when Bondy finds "the episode 'Heidegger in France' one of the most exotic in contemporary cultural history", he misses the explanation. The contemporary thinker (*a*) rejects metaphysics; (*b*) scorns reason; (*c*) justifies his irrationality by the absurd supposedly built into the structure—if any—of existence; and (*d*) believes that God is dead, the new gods not yet born. He figures he is placed in a Heideggerian-Beckettian universe, between two unveilings of Being.

And he likes to think, of course, that *he* is the privileged interpreter.

THOMAS MOLNAR

City University
New York

IN MY NOTES I could, at best, raise a number of questions. Professor Molnar provides us with an answer. However, the fact remains that there are so many more books—and "Heideggerian" books, at that—on Martin Heidegger in *France* than anywhere else, including Germany! Does a general explanation dispose of this specific cultural and intellectual problem?

I might, however, have added that there is a burning interest in Heidegger's thought in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, although it is seldom expressed in print. Leszek Kolakowski once pointed out that the experience of "anguish", the human horizon of death never concerned Marx and his followers. The Marxist system, although called "materialism", is in this respect a disembodied idealism.

Let me also add as a footnote to Molnar, that the correspondence conducted over many years between the philosopher from Messkirch and Hannah Arendt may, when it is published—we may have to wait some years—enrich our understanding of this influential and enigmatic thinker.

FRANÇOIS BONDY

Zurich

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Life & Letters Today

New York

A CIVIL TONGUE: *Illiterate pomposities that are turning the American language into the linguistic equivalent of junk food.*

Witness the California Highway Patrol: "If you drink, exclude vehicle use." Witness Nelson Rockefeller: "I cannot conceive of any scenario in which that could eventuate." Witness Gerald Ford: "I feel very secure in the capability that I have to do the job." Witness anonymous advertising-blurb writer:

> *"Toward finding better ways to work out our problems, we offer the Western Institute of Aviation for broadening the base of understanding, evolving a means of lifting up our eyes and objectives and, hopefully, realizing our mutual interdependence in optimizing aviation services to people through the synergism of our efforts."*

And witness Art Education:

> *"In terms of arting, where the reference condition is not fixed or even known conceptually but rather something coming to being, what can we hope through our formative hermeneutic movement?"*

This is the way that Andy, to our innocent hilarity, used to talk on the "Amos 'n' Andy" show. And now it is taken seriously.

THE NEW YORKER

London

MAD HATTERS: Lewis Carroll was an Oxford don and his real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. It was bad enough that people didn't know that the "g" in Dodgson must remain silent; what was worse was that they couldn't see that "Lewis Carroll" was just a phoney name, created by translating "Charles Lutwidge" into Latin, so making it "Ludovicus Carolus", and then translating it into English again.

Hundreds of fatheads who couldn't cop this addressed their fan letters to "Lewis Carroll, Christ Church, Oxford", which vexed Professor Dodgson so much that they were all Returned to Sender by the post office, bearing the laughable imprint NOT KNOWN.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

London

PLAY-A-BOUTS: *The headmistress of a London school in a working class area took it over two years ago when it had a serious reading problem at the leaving age. This has been dealt with by tackling it from the earliest years, giving children the chance to read but not forcing it. Books are encouraged; every child has a library card; the reading problem seems to be overcome. But an inspector called (from ILEA) and was apparently outraged at the lack of play facilities—and particularly because some of the under-fives were actually learning to read.*

"Play, play play", the headmistress was exhorted: they must learn through play. But may they not learn also through a book if they are capable? One suspects [Ronald Butt writes] that part of the complaint is that it is thought socially objectionable for one child, who is a naturally early reader, to get a start on another.

THE TIMES

Reading

PUTTING IT MILDLY: Card seen in a Reading shop window:

"For sale. 2nd English edition of the Kama Sutra. Original binding. Some pages slightly loose."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Frankfurt-am-Main

STRESS ON STRESS: *That most over-burdened word in the scientific vocabulary—stress—is just celebrating its 40th anniversary. It was in July 1936 that the Austrian scientist, Hans Selye, then living in Canada, first used the word in its current sense in an article published in "Nature", referring to the organic reaction to heavy burdens of one kind or another (the "alarm reaction" involving hormones and other factors in an organism's resistance).*

Today the same word and same spelling (although in German with a heavy Teutonic accent as "shtress", but the word seems to be bearing up passably) is used in some 40 different languages. Its biography as a concept consists of some 120,000 articles and books, covering medicine, psychology and education.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

London

SYNTAX: *Teachers of English will have to blow the dust and cobwebs off old elementary grammar books again. Syntax—how to arrange words to form proper sentences—forms a major element of a new examination devised for school-leavers.*

It has been introduced as a direct result of growing criticisms by employers of falling English standards among teenagers. Their views—that youngsters cannot even pen a simple letter applying for a job, that their grammar and spelling are atrocious and that they cannot express themselves at interviews—were considered when the new examination syllabus was written.

The examination might also prove useful to college lecturers who come in for a verbal beating from a senior don today. They are accused of slipshod delivery and lazy speech.

Dr Alice Heim, Director of studies in psychology at Cambridge University, says that lecturers speak unclearly and tend to use meaningless phrases to punctuate sentences, such as "you know", "sort of", "all right" and "I mean."

In a book, "Teaching and Learning in Higher Education", she attributes this throw-away style of talking to the reaction against the "public school accent" and the "BBC voice."

> **"It is unfortunate that the current cult should incline also towards a mumbling, stumbling delivery, derived from a reluctance to open one's mouth, to move one's lips and to raise one's voice."**

DAILY TELEGRAPH

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The Welfare State

YOUR "Ill Fares the Welfare State" [ENCOUNTER, September] simply infuriated me. With all the horrors before him, David Moller begins by declaring that "no one . . . suggested the 'dismantling' of the Welfare State." Yet what other rational alternative is there? To insist on the priorities is clearly anti-democratic. It would require treating some citizens' demands as less important than others', which means authoritarianism, something Mr Moller objects to in his essay.

Simply put—without implying simplicity in the problem—the Welfare State is incompatible with individual liberty. It is midway between the free society and totalitarianism, as Ludwig von Mises and F. A. Hayek (among others) have stressed for many decades. But these two brilliant economists and others have failed to present the moral case for dismantling the Welfare State. That case has been made by Ayn Rand, the brilliant Russian-born American philosopher/novelist. It is wrong to steal from some so as to attempt to provide for others; and the wrongness shows itself in the results Mr Moller records so well.

What upsets so many Britons and Americans is that *laissez-faire* is just as much a "system" as Marxism. But it is a good system; and that needs to be insisted on. People must have systems—albeit open-ended ones—so as to make sense of life and community existence. Marxism poses as the sound system to choose, with no alternative being offered outside some mystical systems that satisfy no one who seeks understanding instead of gimmicks. I suggest a concerted effort to defend the free society, not insisting on the half-way dream of a "rational welfare state." Quite a lot hinges on implementing this suggestion—for everyone, including (especially) the poor in whose behalf the bulk of the nonsense has been accepted from Welfare-Statists.

TIBOR R. MACHAN

Department of Philosophy
State University College
Fredonia, New York

An End to *An Adventure*

I WISH TO MAKE a remark on a minor point in Dame Joan Evans's most interesting article in the October issue of ENCOUNTER. A house in the Avenue de Paris at Versailles could not have a gate to the park of the Château, as any map of Versailles will show. It could be ascertained where Robert de Montesquiou had a house at Versailles in 1901 but I am not, at the moment, in a measure to do so.

C. J. BISSERY

Le Chesnay
France

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AUTHORS

Laurence Lerner is Professor of English at the University of Sussex. His critical works include *The Uses of Nostalgia* (1972) and *Introduction to English Poetry* (Edward Arnold, 1975).

J. P. Stern is Professor of German, University College, London. His books include *On Realism* (Routledge, 1973) and *Hitler: the Führer and the People* (Harvester Press, 1975). Professor Stern's *Nietzsche* will be published by Fontana in the autumn; his article in this issue is included in *Nietzsche: Imagery and Thought*, edited by Malcolm Pasley, which Methuen will publish early this year.

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich) to which he contributes a regular column on people and politics in Europe.

Desmond Hawkins is the author of *Hardy: Novelist and Poet* (David & Charles, 1976), and is currently working on a book about Agnes Grove. He worked for many years for the BBC and recently received an award for last year's best radio dramatisation.

Malcolm Bradbury is Professor of American Literature, University of East Anglia. His most recent novel is *The History Man*, published in 1975 by Secker & Warburg, who last year brought out *Who Do You Think You Are?*, a collection of his stories (including several originally published in ENCOUNTER). The first article in his three-part study of transatlantic images in fiction was published in our December 1976 issue.

Alexander Walker is film critic of the *Evening Standard*. His books include *Hollywood, England* (Michael Joseph, 1974) and *Rudolph Valentino* (Hamish Hamilton, 1976).

Benedict Nightingale is theatre critic of the *New Statesman*, and the author of *Charities* (Allen Lane, 1973).

Professor Sidney Hook is Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University. His recent books include *Education and the Taming of Power* (Alcove Press, London; Library Press, USA) and *Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life* (Basic Books, 1975). An evaluation of his philosophy by Lewis Feuer, "The Pragmatic Wisdom of Sidney Hook", was published in the October 1975 ENCOUNTER. His own most recent contribution to the magazine was "The Strange Case of Whittaker Chambers" (January 1976).

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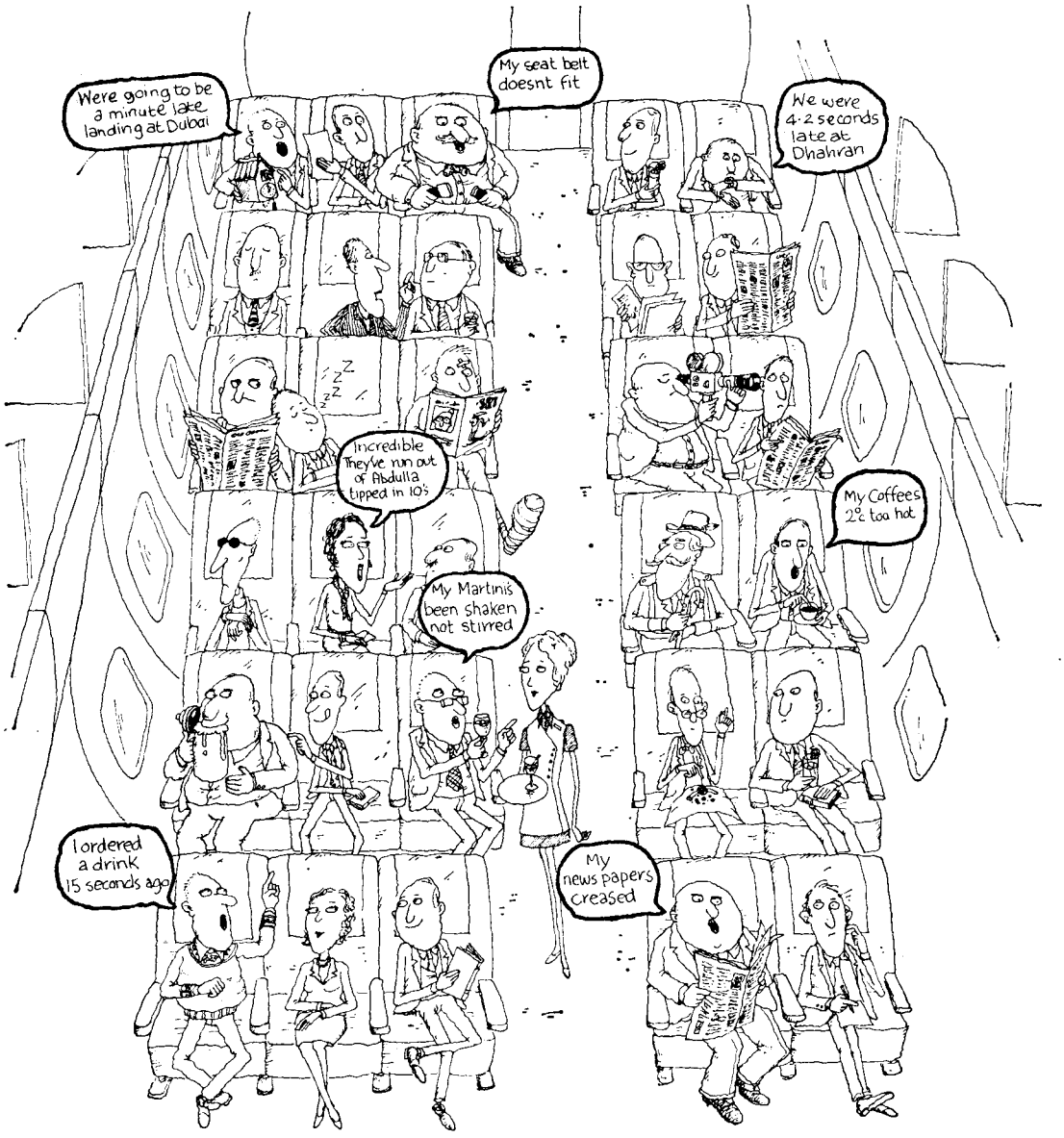
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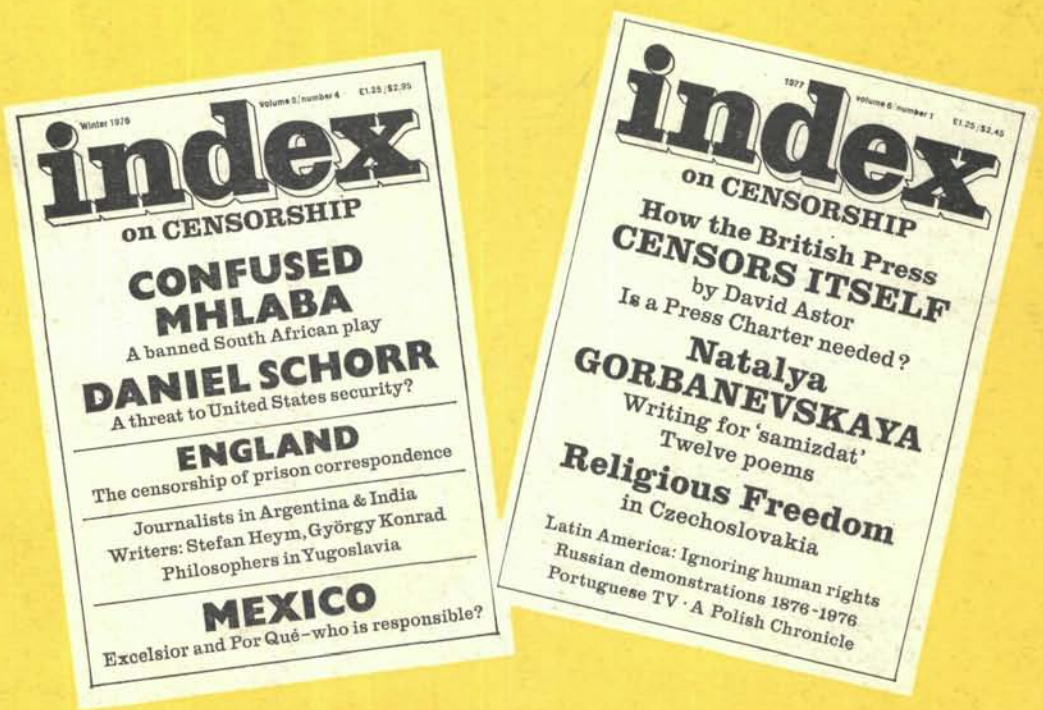

The New Yorker says: "One of the most interesting publications we know of – and one of the few we read from cover to cover as soon as it arrives – is *Index on Censorship,* a London-based magazine devoted to the defense of freedom of expression. *Index* provides an outlet for manuscripts that have been suppressed by tyrannical governments, from Moscow and Prague to Teheran and Santiago, and it publishes lengthy reports, full of specific information, on threats to freedom of speech in whatever countries they occur – and they occur, in varying degrees, nearly everywhere on earth."

Arthur Miller says: "The job *Index* is doing is unique and it needs to be read by anyone who wants to know his time."

* Professor Barbara Sproul in (MORE) magazine

Martin Ennals of Amnesty International says: "*Index* is a unique and valuable source; by its scope and impartiality it graphically demonstrates that censorship is the monopoly of no single continent or ideology."

Sir Robert Birley says: "We must not forget what *Index* means to those whose work appears in it. They generally know that it has, and then they feel once more in touch with the world. This above all is what they need to give them hope."

Subscriptions to the six issues of 1977 can be had by sending £6 (or US$14) to **Oxford University Press** (Journals), Press Rd, London NW10 0DD; or (USA) to **Index on Censorship,** Room 221, 156 Fifth Ave, New York NY 10010. US subscribers receive their copies by accelerated post.

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